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MEXICO IN REVOLUTION

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BY

V. BLASCO IBAÑEZ

AUTHOR OF "THE FOUR HORSEMEN OF THE APOCALYPSE," "MARE NOSTRUM," "WOMAN TRIUMPHANT," ETC., ETC.

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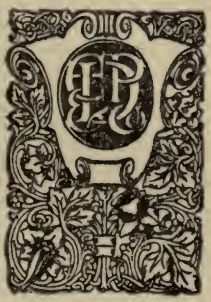

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

The various articles in this volume were written, on my return from Mexico, for the *New York Times,* the *Chicago Tribune* and other important newspapers in the United States.

When I began my articles, the revolution which finally overthrew Carranza had not yet triumphed and "the old man" was still alive. Events moved rapidly while the articles were coming out. Carranza was assassinated and Obregon, with the militarist party, came into power.

Works of the moment, these articles record my various impressions of the days during which they were written. They do not, in consequence, show the unity and homogeneity of a book written after the fact on events already complete in themselves and easily appreciable to the person observing them in perspective and as a whole.

I might, of course, have remodeled these articles and reduced them to chapter form. I

might have suppressed some paragraphs to avoid repetitions and added others to fill in the completed picture. I finally decided to leave them exactly as they appeared in the press, with all their spontaneity as works of the moment.

They do not contain all that I have to say on the Mexico of the present. They are simple impressions, hastily and incompletely jotted down as circumstances warranted or required. I regard them as the first shots on the skirmish line, before my real battle, with all my heavy guns in action, begins.

The final results of my observation and study on contemporary Mexico I shall give, with greater amplitude and more attentive art, in my forthcoming novel called "The Eagle and the Snake."

VICENTE BLASCO IBAÑEZ.

New York, June 20, 1920.

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MEXICO IN REVOLUTION

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I. THE CAUSE OF THE REVOLUTION

I AM just back from Mexico, where I spent a month and a half. In this brief period of time I made the acquaintance of a Government that looked strong and seemed destined to reach the end of its constitutional days peacefully; I witnessed the outbreak of a revolution that in its early stages led a languid life; I saw the decisive triumph of this revolution, brought about by the unexpected assistance of political elements that had seemed out of sympathy with it; and I observed, finally, the flight of President Carranza, the present uncertainty concerning his fate, and the still greater uncertainty regarding the probable future of the new Government in process of formation.

After all, there is nothing extraordinary in this vertiginous movement of events. Of all things Mexican, revolutions move with the greatest velocity.

I went to Mexico to gather material for a novel that I intend to entitle "The Eagle and the Snake." Among my notes there is a statistical table showing the number of governments that Mexico has had since it secured its independence. In less than a hundred years—beginning with 1821—the Republic of Mexico has been served by seventy-two different governments. Now, with the fall of the Carranza régime, the record stands at seventy-three, with time to spare before the century closes. Leaving aside the thirty years of Porfirio Diaz's rule we find that the average life of each government has been approximately one year.

In this series of articles I am going to tell what I saw and what I heard in Mexico. I am going to give the American public, in advance, a small portion of the observations I made for "The Eagle and the Snake." These will be simply the impressions of a novelist, of an impartial observer. I had ample opportunity to talk to Carranza, as well as to his bitterest enemies, and I was able to get their conflicting views. I am grateful to both sides for many courtesies received, but I hold no brief for either party. If there is any group that has

won my sympathy it is the Mexican people, the eternal victim of a tragi-comedy that never ends, the poor slave whom all pretend to redeem and whose lot has remained unchanged for centuries, the everlasting dupe whom the redeemers shower with fine phrases, never telling him the truth because the truth is frequently cruel.

Carranza's Craft Inspired Distrust

I had several fairly intimate talks with President Carranza and I am in a position to state what the underlying motive of his policy was in the last days of his régime. I am fully aware of the fact that Carranza is not one of those men who can be easily probed. Accustomed to the politics of a country where dissimulation is one of the best practical virtues, it is no easy task to sound him. Suffice it to say that when Don Venustiano receives a visitor, the first thing he does, by instinct, is to back his chair against the nearest window. By this simple maneuver he places himself in a semi-darkness so that his body becomes a silhouette from which the face stands out like a faint white spot. In this posture he cannot be observed

closely, while he, on the other hand, can scrutinize at pleasure the face of his visitor which remains exposed to the full flood of light streaming through the window. When something arrests his attention, Carranza has a way of peering over the rim of his light blue spectacles. It was this very trick which made the rustic Pancho Villa suspicious of Carranza and led the former to exclaim on one occasion: "There's nothing the matter with Carranza's eyes. He has very good sight and doesn't need spectacles. He wears them to shade his eyes and hide his thoughts better."

But the reader must not infer from this that Carranza is a sort of shrewd tyrant of awesome aspect. Don Venustiano is an old country gentleman, a ranchman, with all the cunning of rural landowners and all the shrewdness of county politicians, but he is *simpatico* and has a noble bearing. Despite his apparent reserve, at times he waxes loquacious, "feels like a student"—as he puts it—and then he talks freely; he even laughs.

His Hostility to Militarism

Carranza's fall was due to his stubborn attempt to pursue an anti-military policy.

This old chieftain of the revolutionary armies, who, though born in the country, is more warlike than many of his Generals bred in the cities, would never permit any one to give him the title of General. Knowing, undoubtedly, that the chief trouble with Mexico is the incurable eruption of Generals with which the republic is afflicted, he did not care to add another boil to the diseased body of the nation by assuming the title of General.

His followers always referred to him as the "First Chief"; they never called him General. During his campaigns Carranza wore the uniform of a buck private.

Now, on the eve of his retirement from office, he took part more or less directly in the Presidential campaign and he used his influence to bring about the election of a civilian.

"The trouble with Mexico," he told me in an interview, "has always been, and still is, militarism. Few of our Presidents have been men drawn from civil life; always Generals. And

what Generals! . . . No, this thing has got to stop for the good of Mexico. My successor ought to be a civilian, a man of modern views and progressive ideas, capable of preserving domestic peace and directing the economic development of the nation. It is time that my country should begin to live the healthy, normal life which other nations enjoy."

The ideal cherished by Carranza could not be more praiseworthy, but at the same time nothing could be more absurd and dangerous than the means employed by him to carry out his plan. Therefore, while I applaud his views on militarism, I applaud also his downfall.

For President, the Unknown Bonillas

To invest the Presidency of the republic with the civil character that befits it, it would have been necessary to choose a candidate of eminent qualities, a man with a long record of distinguished public service, a man of unquestioned popularity. And what did Carranza do? He did precisely the very opposite thing. He selected one of the most obscure of Mexicans. He hit upon Señor Bonillas, his Ambassador at Washington, a man who has spent most of

his life away from his native land and who even married abroad.

There is another important factor in the situation: the character of the Carranza government in the closing days of its régime.

I am well aware of the fact that when a revolutionary party triumphs in a country like Mexico dissensions are bound to occur in its ranks eventually; these dissensions are inevitable. The "deserving patriots" are legion! They all want their reward, and the country does not have enough wealth to go around and satisfy every appetite. The lucrative offices are few in number and there are dozens of candidates who consider themselves competent to fill them.

There is, moreover, a situation peculiar to Mexico. In every country one can find the disinterested revolutionary type, the ascetic agitator who expects to get from revolution only the ideal satisfaction of victory. Of course, in every revolutionary movement there are shameless self-seekers, but together with these there are noble and disinterested visionaries who sacrifice themselves for the common good and who, after the triumph of their doc-

trines, continue to live like real saints, feeding on the bread and water of their enthusiasm.

Among the Mexicans who occupied the highest public offices after the revolution I searched in vain for the Don Quixote, for the type that appeared in the French and Russian revolutions, the disinterested patriot who thinks only of the common weal without regard to his own advantage. I failed to find him. Those I met are men of hard practical sense who never lose sight of personal profit.

Revolutionaries Usually Rich

I was surprised to see the large number of rich revolutionaries in Mexico. There may be some poor revolutionaries in Mexico—I hope there are some, for in my own country I was once a poor revolutionary—but if there are any such in Mexico their number is so scarce that they can be counted on the fingers of one hand, with some fingers to spare.

The majority of those revolutionaries are undoubtedly the sons of millionaires. They claim that before the revolution they were simple peons, ambulant vendors, subordinate employees, or mere vagabonds. Such claims must

be forced attempts on their part to hide their influential origin and so to flatter the popular masses. If what they say were true, their present wealth could be explained only by some unexpected inheritance recently received from relatives who had heretofore ignored them. Otherwise it would be utterly impossible to understand how men who six or seven years ago were ambulant milk dealers, vendors of dry vegetables or Mexican hats, hungry rural school teachers or mail carrriers, can honestly have acquired fortunes estimated at several millions of dollars, especially since these men have wasted considerable time in revolution. It is equally difficult to explain how so many wives of Generals and Colonels who half a dozen years ago were poor women of the peon class, how so many lady friends of Generals and Colonels, are now able to display expensive jewelry which remind people of the gems bought years ago by the leading Mexican families now in exile.

But let us not insist on these details. Suffice it to say that the prominent leaders of the Mexican revolution made the revolution for a fixed purpose. They do not understand sacrifice for the common good. Carranza had to consoli-

date his new Government. After the first few years he was forced to limit the number of his favorites; whereupon those who were left outside of the golden shower of his favors became the bitter enemies of the First Chief.

When I observed closely the inner circle of intimate friends who gathered around Carranza in his Presidential palace I was struck by their youth. The respectable Don Venustiano, with his white beard and light blue spectacles, looked like the head master of a boarding school for boys. Generals of 27 and grave Ministers of 29 or 30 followed with veneration and gratitude the old First Chief.

The Young Adonis Who Ruled

In reality, one of these youths was the real ruler of the Mexican Republic during the last few years, the real power behind the throne, Juan Barragan, a General 27 years old, the chief of Carranza's staff.

Those who had a petition to make would immediately think, "I shall have to see Juanito Barragan about this."

On account of his youth and amiable character everybody spoke of Barragan as Juanito

("Johnny") Barragan. A simple law student and the son of a well-to-do family, he followed Don Venustiano when the latter rose against Huerta. President Carranza always showed a certain weakness for this youth, who accompanied him everywhere as a beautiful and decorative adjunct to the Presidential entourage.

"The Handsomest Man in the World"

It has been stated recently that Barragan was executed by the revolutionaries of Mexico after Carranza's flight. I hope the rumor is not true. Why kill him? He was the Apollo of the revolution. Tall, handsome, arrogant despite his childlike features, the girls of Mexico consider him the best looking man in the republic—in fact, in the entire world. He was almost a national glory and received honors accordingly. With the bright blue of his uniform and his gold braid he was a dazzling sight. He seemed to have just stepped out of a toy box, freshly varnished. He bought himself a new uniform every week. Twenty-seven years of age, fine health, an amiable character—and master of Mexico!

His enemies said that he owned a whole row

of houses in the principal avenue of Mexico City. Impossible! He could not have had any money left for such investments after throwing it away by the handful as he did. During the last few years it has been a fine business for singers and actresses to go to Mexico! Thanks to the amiable Chief of Staff, an actress could visit Mexico and return to her native land with savings amounting to one or two hundred thousand dollars.

Barragan's power extended even to the university. During my visit to Mexico the Government assigned me to that institution, which was invited to entertain me and direct my excursions over the country. This courtesy did not surprise me. "It is because I am a writer," I thought. But shortly before I left Mexico, through the indiscretion of a functionary, I discovered that a certain famous foreign dancer had also been consigned to the university during her journey in Mexico a year before. Was I offended? Of course not! It was the doing of the amiable Barragan. He received all petitioners with a bountiful generosity, as though he would die rather than fail to serve them. He never said no to any one. He was capable of

surrendering Don Venustiano's head if he was asked for it with real insistence. And Carranza, plain in dress, grave in appearance, a man of strict morals and clean life, when he observed the elegant uniform and the gold braid of his Chief of Staff, seemed to rejoice as though he were contemplating his own image in a looking-glass. On other occasions, when the President would hear of Barragan's successes with the ladies, he would smile with the delight of a kindly grandfather.

"Johnny" Briefly Defends Republic

I left Mexico City without bidding adieu to the Apollo of the revolution. His Excellency, General Don Juan Barragan, was spending whole days with the telephone receiver at his ear, giving orders, with his eyes fixed on the map of Mexico. The followers of Obregon had already taken the field, and "the handsomest Mexican," as the marriageable señoritas and visiting actresses say, had just assumed the duties of a strategist and was busy directing the movements of the Federal troops.

Poor and amiable boy! I can see now why the Carranza régime collapsed so readily.

Bonillas, Carranza's Unfortunate Choice

The real and immediate cause of Carranza's downfall was his obstinate attempt to impose upon the country the Presidential candidacy of Bonillas. If it had not occurred to him to insist on this solution and had he allowed the Presidential campaign to follow its natural course, letting Generals Obregon and Pablo Gonzalez fight it out, he might have completed his Presidential term in peace. And he would probably be revered as an idol to-day by his old subordinates.

The reader will probably ask why Carranza hit upon a candidacy so unpopular as that of Señor Bonillas. To answer this I can offer only conjectures, or rather I must repeat what I heard in Mexico.

As the majority of Mexicans are firmly convinced that Carranza is a tricky politician, because of his reserve and deep-laid machinations, they give the following explanation of his conduct in the Bonillas affair:

Bonillas was to be a mere tool in the hands of Don Venustiano. He had selected him for his very insignificance—because he did not belong

to any party and because he was wholly unknown in the country. Bonillas would thus owe his position entirely to his protector and would not be likely to *darse la vuelta contra el*—in the language of the country, or as the English say, to bite the hand that fed him.

This business of *darse la vuelta* is a Mexican game which must be taken into account, for the country is a famous hotbed of political treason and there is always fear that the friend of to-day may become the enemy of to-morrow. If you help some one to get along in the world in Mexico you are almost sure soon to receive a kick from him. He will boot you to show his self-respect and independence.

With the unknown Señor Bonillas there was no occasion to fear such a kick. A creature of Carranza, he would remain faithful to his chief and he would continue to surround himself with a circle of friends selected by his protector to be his advisers and guardians.

Shortsighted critics did not attribute this purpose to Carranza. They thought that the candidacy of Bonillas was a stratagem invented for the occasion.

"We know the *viejo barbon*," they said, al-

luding to Carranza's white beard. "He has launched the candidacy of Bonillas for the mere purpose of irritating Obregon. Obregon will rise against the Government and a long war will follow. Carranza will then declare that it is impossible to hold elections and will continue in the Presidency indefinitely."

Carranza as a Second Diaz

Others, more farsighted, came nearer to the truth, in my judgment, when they discussed the situation.

"Carranza," they said, "really wishes to be succeeded in the Presidency by Bonillas. Under the direction of Carranza and with a legislature composed of Carranza deputies, Carranza will see to it that the Constitution is revised, eliminating the article which forbids the reëlection of the President. After the article is eliminated Don Venustiano will become President again and he will get himself reëlected indefinitely."

The method is not new. Porfirio Diaz did that very thing. He began his political career by rising against the reëlection of Presidents, and after he became the Chief Magistrate of

the republic he yielded the place for a brief period to one of his own henchmen, had his own Constitution amended, and thus opened the way for his thirty-year rule.

I believe that Carranza really wanted Bonillas to succeed him, but I cannot refrain from judging that in this Don Venustiano rendered his protégé a very poor service.

Of all the personages who figure in this last Mexican revolution Bonillas is the man who inspires my deepest sympathy on account of his misfortune. His rôle has been that of certain good though simple-minded characters of the comedy who inevitably pay for the faults of others, and who, despite their reluctance to get mixed up in quarrels, receive all the blows.

Why did they not leave him alone? He was living so peacefully in Washington as the diplomatic representative of Mexico! His post seemed destined to become perpetual. If Obregon were to succeed Carranza the General would surely keep Bonillas as American Ambassador, because they are both from Sonora and have been friends since their childhood. No matter who might be elected President, Bonillas would be kept in his post, respected as

a good man who serves his country the best he knows how, and who, residing abroad, could hold completely aloof from all domestic political quarrels.

But, alas! Don Venustiano conceived the unhappy idea of selecting Bonillas as his successor and of stirring the Ambassador's ambition, dragging him away from the sweet environment of his family and the noble tranquillity of Washington.

Viva Bonillas, the "Tea Flower"!

Ten months ago the Mexicans were unaware of the existence of Bonillas. A few knew that a gentleman by that name lived in the capital of the United States, and they even suspected that he had done great things for Mexico, although they were not quite sure what those things were.

And, lo! all of a sudden the Government launches the name of this man—a name that arouses no echo in public opinion—as if Bonillas were a providential personage, destined to save the country.

The people of Mexico City have a keen sense of humor and show a veritable genius for in-

venting nicknames. Moreover, the Spanish *zarzuela* companies, the experts in light and comic opera, play a great deal in the theaters of the Mexican capital, so that the public of that city has acquired the same keenness for repartee which characterizes the people of the popular quarters of Madrid.

Among the songs written for the *zarzuela* theaters of Madrid there is one which has become extremely popular and is sung in all the theaters and music halls of the Spanish-American countries. The song tells the story of a poor shepherd girl who has been abandoned and wanders over the face of the earth, not knowing where she was born nor who her parents were. She knows nothing about herself except her nickname, which is Flor de Te, or "Tea Flower."

The malicious people of Mexico City immediately rechristened the Carranza candidate who had come from foreign parts, the candidate who came nobody knew whence and who was going no one knew whither.

Viva Bonillas! Viva Flor de Te! Hurray for Bonillas! Hurray for "Tea Flower"!

And from that moment everybody lost re-

spect for Don Venustiano's whiskers and for the terrifying face he puts on when he is in bad humor.

In the next article I shall relate the tragi-comic incidents through which was born, grew and died the candidacy of "Flor de Te"—the immediate cause of the revolution.

II. THE SAD STORY OF FLOR DE TE

BONILLAS, the candidate picked by Carranza to succeed him in the Presidency of the Republic, is a man who has spent the greater part of his life away from Mexico. Early in his youth he left his native country and wandered into several of the American Southern States, trying his hand at various jobs in an effort to make an honest living and managing to eke out the precarious existence of a worker who is frequently forced to change both residence and occupation. Later, when he was no longer in his teens, he studied engineering in the Boston Institute of Technology.

When Carranza rose against Huerta, Bonillas returned to Mexico and took part in the revolution. His record as a fighting man, however, was not brilliant. He even failed to become a General. He merely served as an engineer, marching in the rear of the revolutionary army with the obscure civilians who looked

after the administrative affairs of the new régime.

After the triumph of the revolution, Carranza, who needed to send to Washington a loyal representative willing to obey instructions explicitly, selected Bonillas. The appointee knew English better than his native tongue and he had been educated in the States —qualifications, these, which gave him a decisive advantage over all the other aspirants to the post of Ambassador to the United States. And he remained in this position throughout the entire administration of Carranza, until the latter conceived the notion of naming Bonillas his heir to the Presidential chair.

Laughing Down the Candidate

I have told, in a preceding article, how the people of Mexico City, surprised at the candidacy of the unknown Bonillas, gave him the nickname of "Flor de Te" (Tea Flower). At first they called him Bonillas "Tea Flower," because no one knew who he was. Later on his enemies claimed they knew his past in its minute details, and poor Señor Bonillas became

something worse than the little shepherd girl of the Spanish song.

A campaign of truth and falsehood was launched by the enemies of his candidacy, with the vociferous approval of all those who were willing to jeer at anything to irritate Carranza. According to them, Bonillas's name was not Bonillas at all. He was not even a Mexican. His real name was Stanford, and he had been born in the United States. Bonillas was the name of his mother, whose blood was the only Mexican blood that ran in the candidate's veins. And the sympathizers of Bonillas (friends of Carranza, public employees and soldiers) would publish the genealogy of the Bonillas family, beginning with the founder of the line—a carpenter who came from Spain when Mexico was still a Spanish colony.

According to his opponents, the Presidential candidate could not speak Spanish. Every morning the opposition press published stories about Bonillas in which he was featured as talking Spanish and so altering the construction and meaning of his words as to say the most shocking things.

A *Gallo* for the Visitor

I myself served indirectly as a pretext for this slanderous propaganda. When a popular foreigner arrives in Mexico the university students generally treat him with a *gallo*. A *gallo* is a night procession, with torchlights, something between a serenade and a masquerade. It marches past the balcony of the house where the honored guest is lodged; and the students, mounted on horseback or riding in automobiles decked with flowers and flags, or on trucks artistically converted into allegorical chariots, sing, shout and make laudatory or burlesque speeches to the guest of honor; and the public, invited by the college boys, joins the parade, with more carriages and bands of music.

I was treated to several *gallos*. The one given me in Mexico City was enormous, more than 15,000 persons taking part in it. The noisy nocturnal procession, including some long stops took two hours to march past the Hotel Regis, where I was stopping, occupying a room next to that of Bonillas. The candidate for the Presidency was not to be found in the

hotel at that time. He had decided to avoid a face-to-face meeting with that youthful and disrespectful crowd, which at sight of him would be sure to make some insulting remarks.

First came Don Quixote and his squire, Sancho Panza; next the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse; and finally a large number of girls, dressed to represent the various Spanish provincial types. But no one gave a thought to "Flor de Te." Of course, we were in Mexico City, and Don Venustiano was near at hand. The horses of the mounted police kept prancing between the carriages in the parade.

Another with a Political Turn

A few days later the students of the University of Puebla gave me another *gallo*. Carranza was not at hand there. Among the groups of masks on horseback and the carriages with allegories of Spain and the Spanish-American republics there was a simple little coach, drawn by one horse and without any decoration whatever. Nevertheless, it was the chief attraction of the parade. It was occupied by a young student attired in an extravagantly checkered suit, the traditional costume used in all the the-

aters of Spanish-speaking countries to represent the conventional Englishman. The mask that covered his face made the crowd hilarious.

"Flor de Te! Hurrah for Flor de Te!" shouted the people, crowding around the coach. And when the procession filed past the balconies of my hotel the youth stood up, and with great solemnity began to greet me in a nasal tone and with the halting speech of one who is not master of the language he is trying to use.

"Meester Bonillas," said the mask, "greets Meester Ibanez, whose works he has read translated into English. Within a few months, perhaps, Meester Bonillas will be able to read them in the original, because he is now studying the language of the country."

Made Mme. Bonillas a Lutheran

This is not true. I chatted with Señor Bonillas on more than one occasion while we were guests together in the same hotel, and I found that he is essentially similar to all his compatriots and can speak Spanish like the rest of them.

But, of course, he could not prevent the extravagant fabrications of his political adversaries. Every day they unearthed a new "se-

cret'' from the past of the candidate supported by Carranza.

''Bonillas has been an American citizen for many years,'' they would spring one day. ''Bonillas, during his adventurous career in the States bordering on the Mexican frontier, was even the Sheriff of a small town.''

The candidate's family did not escape this hostile scrutiny. It was announced one day that Señor Bonillas had married a distinguished lady of English nationality and belonging to the Lutheran Church. Her daughters professed the same faith and were not Catholics! Horrors!

We must bear in mind that the bitterest enemies of Bonillas are men without any religious faith whatsoever. Some even distinguished themselves during the revolution by unnecessary acts of cruelty against Catholic priests. One of Obregon's Generals, perhaps his most intimate friend, in the first days after the triumph of the revolution, made a number of priests and friars, whom he considered enemies of the new régime, sweep the streets of the capital. Moreover, he filled several cattle cars with priests and sent them from Mexico City to

Vera Cruz, making them go without food during the five days that the trip lasted. Despite this, the loudest protests against the religious faith of the Bonillas family came from some of these enemies who fear neither God nor devil.

"What an insult to Mexican women, who are all Catholics," they said. "To think of a Protestant being the first lady of the land!"

Propaganda for Bonillas

The reader must not infer from the foregoing that the candidate supported by Carranza and his numerous friends did nothing to counteract this hostile propaganda.

In reality, Bonillas himself could not do very much. He adapted his personal conduct to the trend of events and followed the suggestions of his protector. But the Bonillas Campaign Committee, composed of Carranza Generals, Senators and Deputies loyal to the cause, worked with an energy never equaled in Mexico.

I must confess that I have rarely seen a publicity campaign more enormous and better organized than that which advertised the name of Bonillas over the whole republic.

When I reached Mexico, a few days later than the Carranza candidate, I could not hide my surprise as I crossed the international bridge and entered the frontier town of Nuevo Laredo. Low, adobe houses! Groups of men with enormous hats, as broad as umbrellas, sunning themselves with imperturbable gravity! Streets with deep holes, over which my automobile bounced, groaning with iron anguish! And on this gray and monotonous background, which has remained unaltered for fifty years, a great variety of paper signs, of all colors and sizes, posted on the doors, on the mud walls, and even on the ox carts standing in the plazas.

Everywhere the portrait of a man, Bonillas, unknown yesterday, and to-day converted overnight into a national Messiah by the will of another man living over there in a city of the Mexican plateau! This portrait bore underneath it flattering promises: "Democracy," "Peace." No less numerous were the printed statements couched in pompous and verbose language to impress the gullible and superstitious rural masses, a majority of whom are illiterate.

Skilful Posters That Failed

Later, as I penetrated farther into the interior, I observed how the Bonillas propaganda grew in intensity from one station to another, until I reached Mexico City, where it became a wild orgy of publicity. Huge posters, many meters long, advised the people in enormous letters to vote for Bonillas. Every open lot, and every old house, was covered with signs: "Bonillas represents the death of militarism!" "If you want to see the end of revolution, vote for Bonillas." As you walked about the streets, your eye would be caught by large, red arrows pointing to something farther on. And if you followed their direction, you would meet Bonillas's name a few hundred yards ahead. At night the picture of the candidate could be seen illuminated by indirect light and smiling upon you from some balcony.

This obsessing propaganda, which met you everywhere, must have been the work of some old hand at the business. Many people said that the partisans of Bonillas had imported a clever publicity expert from the United States.

Occasionally your attention would be arrested

by a printed bill posted on the walls with great profusion. The casual transient, even if he did not take sides in the political campaign, felt drawn by the novelty of the document. "The Defects of the Engineer Bonillas." "What the Engineer Bonillas Lacks!"

Extravagance That Hurt Carranza

"Well," you would say, "it's high time some one said something against this much-praised man."

But from the very first lines of the document you discovered that the defects of Bonillas were that he was not a trouble-making General like the "others," but a man of peace and honest labor; and the only things lacking in his record were the executions and dragonades so numerous in the history of his rivals.

This extraordinarily expensive publicity, the like of which had never been seen in Mexico, could not possibly have been financed by Bonillas. His Campaign Committee paid, but composed as this committee was of men who had always lived on the national budget, it is not likely that the members made any personal sacrifices. In short, everybody believed that Car-

ranza was defraying the campaign expenses of Bonillas and that he was doing it with public funds.

This system of propaganda was, at the same time, an indirect means of corruption. All the great Mexican dailies, even those that were hostile to the candidate, sold whole pages of advertising space to the Bonillas committee and the editors thought they were saving their consciences by inserting a line at the foot of the page stating that it had been bought and paid for at advertising rates by the Bonillas party. The net result of this was that the papers carried in their news columns a few brief lines of criticism against the Government candidate and in the rest of the edition pictures of Bonillas and his friends and long articles praising the candidate and his policies.

Millions Spent in Vain

How much was spent in this campaign?

The sympathizers of General Obregon and Pablo Gonzalez state positively that Carranza had already used $2,000,000 popularizing his candidate, and that he was disposed to spend a great deal more if it became necessary.

The need of incurring these extravagant expenditures is even more difficult to justify than the merits of the candidate Bonillas.

The mountainous heaps of printed paper, the hundreds of thousands of photographs and the miles of advertisements were wholly useless as aids in a Presidential election in Mexico. To use the election methods of a modern, politically matured country in poor Mexico, the eternal victim of all sorts of tyrannies, is about as effective as importing sewing machines into a country where cloth is unknown. What is the use of such publicity in a country that has never gone to the polls?

The Mexican people, in reality, does not know what an election means. During the long period of his rule Porfirio Diaz always reëlected himself. Until the unfortunate Madero turned up, no one dared to protest against the practice.

Before Porfirio Diaz's time the way to power led along the path of revolution, or else the elections were so scandalously immoral that they provoked and justified uprisings. Since the close of the Diaz régime the present election was the first in the history of Mexico sched-

uled to be carried on in a modern way. We have seen how it developed into a revolution.

The great propaganda in favor of Bonillas seemed ridiculous, and at times ironically sad, especially when we consider the character of the country. So much printed paper for a poor people in great part illiterate, owing to the neglect of its rulers! So much electioneering, when every voter knew that his preference counted for nothing and that in the end the candidate backed by the Government would win out! . . .

To vote conscientiously, the elector must have the conviction that his vote will be respected, that it will mean something. In Mexico the man who casts his ballot knows that he is exercising a useless right. The result will always be what the party in power decides. Moreover, the privilege of voting is a dangerous function. If the man in power gets wind of the fact that the voter is trying to be independent and think with his own head, the voter is soon brought to his senses!

Obregon and Gonzalez are right when they justify their uprising with the statement that

the Government had denied their candidacies the guarantees of security and fair play. It is true. Carranza, who is a stubborn man, incapable of budging an inch after he has once made up his mind, had decided that Bonillas should win, and Bonillas would have been the next President of Mexico, if the revolution had not broken out. All the States that had Carranza Governors would have voted *en masse* for Bonillas, as though there were no followers of the other candidates there at all.

But Obregon and Gonzalez are no saints; they were not born yesterday, and they certainly are not political infants. Their record is almost as long and brilliant as that of Don Venustiano and no one knows what they will each cook up when the elections are announced again.

What can we expect from a country when it has never had an electoral body considered and respected as a vital and permanent institution? What can we expect from a country where the defeated candidate always resorts to arms, claiming that he has been defrauded?

If the elections prepared by Carranza had

taken place Bonillas would have won in all the Carranza States. But Obregon, for instance, who controlled the Government of the State of Sonora, would have received every single vote cast there, and Bonillas, who was also born in that State, would not have received a ballot.

It is possible that real elections may be held in Mexico in the future. Why should we not be optimistic about it? But up to the present time no candidate has ever failed to coerce the national will by voting the people in his own favor wherever and whenever he has had a chance. And his opponents have done the same thing, under similar conditions.

The Leper and the Flies

The candidacy of Bonillas, however, had a strength of its own, aside from that received from the Government. This strength was the war-weariness of a certain class of people—perhaps the class most worthy of sympathy—the small merchants and poorer landowners, the lower middle class, which has been suffering the effects of an endless revolution for ten years. I heard the complaints of this class. I visited some Mexican cities where this element is pre-

ponderant and saw its efforts to live in peace and keep out of the everlasting turmoil.

Elections had come again to disturb the relative quiet to which these people had recently become accustomed.

"Why should we hold elections?" some one would ask me. "It would be better to have Don Venustiano continue in office. I don't like him. But he is in already and that is preferable to starting all over again with a new one."

Many of these people told the old story of the leper which some of my American readers, perhaps, do not know.

A good Mussulman takes pity on a leper whom he sees sitting motionless on the ground with his sores covered with flies. To alleviate the suffering of the stricken man, the good Samaritan drives away the parasites. But the leper, instead of thanking his benefactor, goes into a rage and heaps abuse upon him for his officiousness.

"Why art thou treating me as if I were the worst of thine enemies?" the leper cries. "The flies thou hast driven away were already satisfied. They were full of my substance and I could endure them. But now they will be suc-

ceeded by other flies of ravenous appetite and my torments will begin again. Curses upon thine head!"

A portion of the Mexican people had resigned themselves to endure the torment of the well-fed Carranza flies. These people did not like Carranza, but they accepted the successor picked by him because they knew that Carranza's successor and his friends would prove less voracious than the flies of any opposing party.

"If the old man has to go," these people would say, "we'll take Bonillas. He hasn't done anything worth while, but neither has he done anything bad . . . and, at any rate, he is not a General."

This business of being a General considerably worries every Mexican who has witnessed a revolution without being in it.

When Bonillas Returned

The entry of Bonillas into Mexico when he returned from Washington as the candidate of the Civil Party made many people predict the revolution which broke out a month later. Never was the homecoming of conquering hero prepared with greater care than that of the ob-

scure Mexican-American engineer, converted by the revolution first into a diplomatic agent and later into a Presidential candidate. A special train full of admirers (many of whom had never seen him before, but who, nevertheless, already worshiped him) was dispatched by the Government to meet him at the frontier. Two boys with the rank of General had charge of all the arrangements, relieving Don Venustiano of this petty labor. General Montes—about 30—perhaps the only one among the revolutionaries who hails from a military school, was the President of the Comité Civilista assigned to receive Bonillas, to accompany him, and frequently, to speak for him. General Barragan, chief of the President's staff, organized the festivities in Mexico City. He requisitioned all private automobiles not in use and mobilized all the officials and friends of the Government, concentrating them in the capital.

I heard protests from certain men of the rank and file of the Carranza forces about this triumphal reception. "They ordered me," one said, "to fill twenty automobiles with sympathizers of Bonillas. I signed a receipt for twenty cars, and when the time came for the

parade they sent me only two. What became of the other eighteen, which, undoubtedly, will appear as paid for, I don't know."

Despite these insignificant slips the parade was splendid. An interminable line of carriages extended from the station to the lodgings of the candidate. There were hurrahs for Bonillas, vociferous *vivas* from members of the police force who appeared disguised in civilian clothes the better to hide the nature of their enthusiasm. There were manifestations of approval and sympathy from all the humbler employees. Flowers were thrown by the basketful by the señoritas who were daughters of the functionaries. In short, there was a general stirring of the masses, who are always moved by the sound of music and the sight of unfurled flags, irrespective of what the music and the flags stand for.

Fiesta Spoiled by Obregon's Men

But the followers of Obregon decided to take part in the fiesta. A group of Generals and Colonels who sympathize with the General went to meet the parade.

These Mexican Generals created by the revo-

lution are a set of aggressive, harebrained boys, brought into prominence by the abnormal condition of civil war; boys who, to go from the parlor to the dining room of their homes, deem it necessary to put on a cartridge belt and a couple of automatic pistols. In a future article entitled "The Generals" I shall describe this original and dangerous type.

These warriors of the Obregon camp disturbed the triumphant entry of Bonillas with pranks worthy of college boys celebrating a great athletic victory. First they scattered handfuls of nails along the streets, which caused many a blowout and much delay. Then they pelted the solemn personages who rode in the carriages with sticky, ill-smelling projectiles. And when Bonillas and his staff appeared on the balcony to address the multitude the Obregonists threw balls of asafœtida and worse, which made the speakers cough and hem and even brought tears to the eyes of Flor de Te and his panegyrists.

The Bonillas party found it a difficult task to address the people. The orators had to hold their noses with one hand, while they fanned the air with gestures from the other. And

when, under this handicap, General Candido Aguilar, the son-in-law of Carranza, began to expound, with military eloquence, the superiority of civilian rule and the necessity of suppressing militarism, his hostile brothers-in-arms gave up the offensive they had begun with ill-smelling ammunition and started another with foul language.

In loud exclamations they inveighed against the virtue of the mothers of the men in Bonillas's party—ladies whom they had never seen—and finally the candidate and his partisans, tired of hearing themselves called sons of this and sons of that, appealed to the police, who were anxiously waiting for the word. And the disturbers of the meeting were hurried off to jail.

Open Breach with Carranza

From that moment things happened with great rapidity. Obregon, infected with an oratorical fever, started through the States in a whirlwind campaign in favor of his candidacy. He did not mince words. "If I am not elected President," he said, "it will be because Don Venustiano has decided to block me at all costs.

But before I let that *viejo barbon* trick me out of the Presidency, I shall take the field against him."

And the bewhiskered old gentleman, who has a temper of his own, retaliated by sending the police to break up the meetings of the Obregonistas and beat up their followers. Moreover, Carranza got hold of certain letters in which it appeared that Obregon was in alliance with the chiefs of certain bandit bands which had been defying the constituted authorities. Taking these as evidence, Carranza issued an order to have Obregon brought to the capital and court-martialed. He was on the point of sending him to jail when Obregon escaped.

I believe that in the last days of his rule, Carranza took special pains to harass Obregon for the purpose of precipitating the revolution which the latter was preparing. His policy was to provoke an abortion. "If they intend to rise against me," Carranza figured, "the best thing I can do is to drive them to it at once. They will be less prepared to fight."

Bonillas Put in Danger

During the electoral struggle between Obregon and Carranza, Señor Bonillas, the innocent cause of the political duel, kept in the background, limiting himself to obeying the instructions of Montes, the President of the Campaign Committee, who, in his turn, took orders from Don Venustiano.

The ill-starred candidate! On many an occasion I saw him in the hotel at luncheon, surrounded by crowds of "enthusiastic admirers" who came from the provinces to get their first glimpse of him. At other times I found him alone with his son, a young student, whom Bonillas's wife and daughters had undoubtedly ordered to accompany his papa in this adventure.

Exhausted by the campaign activities, which were a novel experience to him, Bonillas used to go out on some afternoons for an automobile ride in the vicinity of Mexico City. One day at dusk a group of mounted Obregonistas, hardened old *guerrilleros,* tried to kidnap him, to put him away until after the elections. A battle fit for the movies ensued for the moment be-

tween the would-be kidnapers and the police who were escorting Bonillas in other automobiles. In the mêlée an Obregonist General was captured, an old ranchman who happened to find himself "by accident" on the scene of the fight.

"You were attempting to kidnap Ambassador Bonillas," the Chief of Police told the Obregonist General.

"Kidnap that poor devil!" the rural chief replied. "What for? What could I do with him? . . . If it had been Don Venustiano! . . . "

From that day on, I never saw Bonillas again. His partisans feared for his life. The hotel was not a safe place, and, therefore, his Campaign Committee, laying hands again on the public funds at their disposal, installed him in a private house.

The candidate, showing praiseworthy coolness in the presence of dangers which his followers probably exaggerated, gave constant proof of great loyalty and obedience to Carranza.

"Where are you taking me to-day? Where does Don Venustiano wish me to go?" he would ask.

Perils of Campaign Tour

At first he attended several meetings in Mexico City, packed with well-trained adherents of the Government. Later on, he was obliged to go to the capitals of several States to counteract with his presence the effects of Obregon's campaign. And here was where his real sufferings and dangers began.

It seems that the personnel of the railways is largely Obregonista. Moreover, Mexicans do not need to belong to the Railway Union to learn how to cut a railway line. To blow up a train with dynamite or to destroy in short order a dozen miles or so of railroad track, has come to be a national art within the reach of everybody. Ten years of revolution have provided ample schooling for the purpose.

The Bonillas train endured the most romantic trials and tribulations on its journey over the interior States. In one place the locomotive would come to a stop barely in time to avoid rushing over a section of vanished track; at another point, the train would narrowly escape plunging into a pit; later still, it would be totally

wrecked, with loss of lives among the military escort.

Finally, the Obregon coup surprised Bonillas while he was conducting his campaign in the State of Jalisco. The enemy cut off the retreat of the train by lifting a few rails, and the Carranza candidate had to return over the rough country to the capital in an automobile.

After this Bonillas disappeared entirely from the public eye. He continued to reside in Mexico City, but who had time to think of him?

The attention of the entire country was now fixed on Carranza and Obregon. War had broken out. Montes, the President of the Campaign Committee, had taken command of a body of troops. Candido Aguilar, Bonillas's war-like orator, had gone to Vera Cruz to recruit forces for his father-in-law, Carranza.

And Where Is Bonillas Now?

Nothing more has been heard about Señor Bonillas. As he was in Mexico City, it is certain that unless he got out with Carranza he has fallen into the hands of his triumphant enemies.

He lived so happily in Washington before

Carranza singled him out for the honor of running for President! How he and his family must miss those happy days which now seem so far off and which, nevertheless, were passing only a few months ago!

His life is not in danger; he does not run the slightest risk. The successful revolutionaries, if they have captured him in Mexico City, must have thoughts about their prisoner similar to those expressed by the rustic General arrested by the police at the time of the attempted kidnaping. "What can we do with this poor devil? . . . If we had Don Venustanio!"

Moreover, Bonillas and Obregon hail from the same State, Sonora, and they have known each other since they were boys. I know that Obregon likes Bonillas, but I don't think that Obregon's affection can be flattering to the vanity of Bonillas.

"A nice fellow, my friend Bonillas," said Obregon to me one day. "He is reliable, conscientious and hard-working. The world has lost a first-class bookkeeper. . . . If I ever become President of the Republic I shall make him cashier in some bank."

III. "CITIZEN" OBREGON

I MET Obregon two days before he fled from Mexico City, declaring himself in open rebellion against the authority of President Carranza.

At the time of my arrival in Mexico Obregon was campaigning for his election in distant States of the republic. Several friends of mine, who are enthusiastic followers of the General, were anxious to have me meet and hear their idol. "As soon as Obregon comes back," they said, "we'll arrange a luncheon or dinner so that you two men may meet and know each other."

As a matter of fact, Obregon did not return; he was forcibly brought back to the capital by Carranza, who decided to try him for complicity with the rebels who had been in arms for some time against the Government. This was an effective means of putting an end to the campaign of insults and threats that Obregon had been conducting in various States.

The forcible return of Obregon to Mexico City caused great excitement among the people of the capital and stirred their curiosity even more.

"What next?" they asked. "Will the old man have courage enough to send Obregon to jail and put him out of the running in that way? Will Obregon start a revolution to preserve his personal liberty?"

And when many were asking themselves these questions with a certain anxiety, fearing the consequences of a final break between the master Carranza and his old pupil Obregon, my Obregonista friends came to notify me that they had arranged my interview with their hero.

"The General expects you to take luncheon with him to-morrow," they told me.

Luncheon with the National Hero

I had insisted that the luncheon take place in a public restaurant, in full view of everybody, to avoid the possibility of false interpretations. If the luncheon were given in a private house to many people it might seem that I had a certain predilection for Obregon. There was no reason whatever why I should figure as a Car-

ranzista or an Obregonista. My wishes were more than amply fulfilled. The luncheon was held in the Bac, the most centrally located restaurant in the capital. To make it even less secret, it was decided to have it in the main dining room, near the orchestra platform, rather than in a private room.

Obregon was at that time a personage in disgrace. It was true that he might rise again at any moment, but it was equally possible that he might be down for the full count. He had enthusiastic friends, but he had also against him "old man" Carranza, an enemy of tenacious hatreds and indomitable energy. The mysterious hour when public opinion shakes off its inertia and swings unexpectedly to one side or the other had not yet struck. The timid were still holding aloof; the crafty were making their calculations, but had not yet succeeded in dispelling their own doubts.

Obregon was still an unknown quantity. If you sided with him you might climb to a position in the Cabinet, but you also might walk to a place in front of the firing squad. The shrewd ones were waiting for the atmosphere to clear a little, and Obregon could count only on his

personal following, the friends who had been faithful to him through thick and thin. The men who watch the trend of events from a point of vantage and eagerly await the psychological moment to rush to the succor of the sure winner had not yet heard the call.

The Disconcerting Obregon

When I entered the restaurant I saw Obregon sitting at a table with a friend to whom he was explaining the fine points of a cocktail which the General himself had invented. The reader must not jump at conclusions and infer that Obregon is a drunkard because I found him so engaged. I believe he drinks very little. During the luncheon he took beer in preference to wine, and on several occasions he called for water. But as a warrior who has lived in the open air, suffering the rigor of inclement weather and spending whole nights without sleep, he likes to take a casual drink from time to time to tune up his nervous system.

It would be equally erroneous to imagine him as a Mexican chieftain of the type which we so frequently see in the movies and vaudevilles —a copper-colored personage with slanting

eyes and thick, stiff hair, sharp as an awl; in short, an Indian dressed up like a comic-opera General. Obregon is nothing of the sort; he is white, so positively white that it is difficult to conceive his having a single drop of Indian blood in his veins. He is so distinctively Spanish that he could walk in the streets of Madrid without any one guessing that he hailed from the American hemisphere.

"My grandparents came from Spain," he told me. "I don't know from which province. Other people bother their heads a great deal about their ancestors. They imagine they come from noble stock and claim descent from Spanish Dukes and Marquises. I know only that my people came from Spain. They must have been poor folk driven to emigrate by sheer hunger."

The personage began to reveal himself. Obregon is a man who is always trying to amaze his hearer, now with explosions of pride, now with strokes of unexpected humility. The important thing for him is to be disconcerting, to say something that his listeners are not expecting to hear.

Close-Up of the Idol

He is still young—not quite 40. He has a strong and exuberant constitution. You can see at once that the man is brimming over with vitality. A slight varicosis has colored his cheeks with a number of slender, red veins, which give a reddish tint to his complexion. His enemy Don Venustiano suffers also from varicosis of the face, but his nose is the only feature that shows it prominently. It is furrowed by a series of red, blue and green veins that remind you of the wavy lines on a hydrographic map. All aggressive men have a more or less close resemblance to birds and animals of prey. Some are thin and sharp beaked, like hawks. Others have the mane and the arrogance of the lion. A few are lithe and mysterious, like the tiger. Obregon, with his short, thick neck, broad shoulders and small, sharp eyes, which on occasion emit fierce glints, reminds you of a wild boar.

Obregon is single and lives the life of a soldier, attended by one aid, an ex-ranchman who is even rougher than he. As Obregon has only one arm, and, consequently, cannot devote more

than one hand to the care of his person, the "hero of Celaya"—as he is frequently called—is rather slovenly in appearance. In his military uniform he may look better. The man I met wore a dirty and much-worn Panama hat, baggy trousers and a shabby coat, one of whose sleeves hung empty, showing that the arm had been amputated near the shoulder.

Obregon's apparent contempt for all personal adornment is characteristic of the man. Another reason for his carelessness in matters of dress is his desire to flatter the Mexican populace, who consider that his slovenly garb brings him closer to them.

The missing arm enables the people to recognize Obregon at a distance. They greet him enthusiastically whenever they see him. Obregon is the conqueror of Pancho Villa; he is the man who broke up the military power that came near placing that old cattle rustler in the Presidential chair of the republic.

Villa, Defeated, Almost Forgotten

Villa is almost forgotten in Mexico. He is talked about more in the United States than in his own country. A few years ago he was

"The General" among all Generals, and many even spoke enthusiastically of his military talent, seeing in him the man who would take it upon himself to exterminate any foreigner daring to invade the soil of the nation. Now he is nothing but a bandit and people avoid all reference to him. He will continue to make trouble, but his star has surely set. Obregon defeated him in ten bloody skirmishes, misnamed battles, and this was sufficient to make Obregon the hero of the hour. Moreover, Pancho Villa has escaped bodily injury; he has all his limbs. With insolent good luck he has kept out of the way of bullets. Obregon, on the contrary, has only one arm, thus adding to his heroic record the sympathy that the martyr arouses.

I sat down and the luncheon began, a luncheon that started at noon and lasted until 4.

Don Venustiano, always suspicious, as is natural in the head of a nation where every one is likely to *darse la vuelta* —to betray—and no one knows with certainty who is his friend and who is his enemy, spoke to me a few days later about this luncheon. I was the one to

broach the subject. I told him frankly that I had lunched with one of his enemies.

"I know," he replied. "But what the devil did you have to talk about that it took you four whole hours?"

And he scrutinized my eyes as though he were trying to read my thoughts.

Obregon's Debut in Chick-peas

In reality Obregon had nothing interesting to tell me. But he is such a character! It is so agreeable to sit and listen hours and hours to his animated, lively and picturesque conversation, which is more Spanish than Mexican.

He had selected the table near the orchestra so that he could give orders to the musicians. He was anxious to show me that he was not an ignorant soldier and that he loved music—Mexican music, of course, for other kinds of music mean little to him. And while the orchestra played the "Jarabe," the "Cielito" and the "Mañanitas"—Mexican national airs—Obregon talked and talked, swallowing meanwhile pieces of food that he had an attendant cut for him, as he can use only one hand.

The General is invincible in conversation. I can talk a great deal myself, but I was forced to withdraw before his onslaught, as thoroughly defeated as Pancho Villa himself. I listened.

He told me the story of his youth. He is sure that he was born to be the first everywhere. He does not say so himself, but he helps you to suspect it with modest insinuations. In Sonora he was a trader in *garbanzos* —chick-peas—and although he made rather small profits, he is sure that he would have become eventually the first merchant in Mexico —a great millionaire.

"You see, the revolution spoiled all that for me. I then became a soldier and I rose to be a General."

What he neglected to add was that, in spite of his General's commission, he remained in business just the same, and his enemies affirm that he has realized his ambition to become a millionaire. He has a monopoly at present of all the chick-pea trade in Mexico. The peas are exported to Spain, where *garbanzos,* as they are called, are an article of common consumption. The same enemies assert that all

the farmers in Mexico are obliged to sell their *garbanzos* to Obregon, at a price which he himself fixes. That is the advantage of being a hero and of losing an arm in defense of the Constitution.

"All of Us Thieves, More or Less"

However, I shall not dwell on what Obregon's enemies say about him. The General went on talking about himself. He has a line of *risqué* stories which he tells with a brutal frankness smacking of the camp and the bivouac. They helped me to understand the popularity of the man. He talks that way with everybody, with the women of the street, with the workingmen he meets, with the peasants in the country, and those simple people swell with pride at being treated with such familiarity and at hearing such amusing stories from a national hero, the conqueror of Celaya, a former Minister of War, and a man who has only one arm!

"They have probably told you that I am a bit of a thief."

Taken somewhat aback, I looked around in surprise to make sure it was really Obregon who had said that, and that he had said it to

me. I hesitated, not knowing really what answer to make.

"Yes," he insisted. "You have heard that story without a doubt. All of us are thieves, more or less, down here."

"Why, General," I said, with a gesture of protest, "I never pay any attention to gossip! All lies, I am sure."

But Obregon ignored what I was saying, and continued:

"The point is, however, I have only one hand, while the others have two. That's why people prefer me. I can't steal so much or so fast."

A burst of laughter! Obregon saluted his own witticism with the reserved hilarity of a cynical boy, while his two friends who were with us paid tribute to the hero's jest with endless boisterousness.

Joke of the Itching Palm

This oratorical success made the General still more talkative. He insisted on treating me to more stories, perhaps to show me that he held the gossip about him in contempt, perhaps to enjoy the pleasure of surprising and embar-

rassing me by the spectacle of a man depreciating himself.

"You probably don't know how they found the hand I lost!"

In reality, I did know, just as, for that matter, I had already heard the joke about his being more honest than the others because he had only one hand. But in order not to spoil the General's delight in his own brilliancy I assured him I did not know the story.

"You know I lost my arm in battle. It was carried off by a shell which exploded near me while I was talking with my staff. After giving me the first treatments, my men set out to find my arm on the ground. They looked about in all directions, but couldn't find it anywhere. Where could the hand and its fragment of arm have gone to?

" 'I'll find it for you,' said one of my aids, an old friend of mine. 'It will come back by itself. Watch me!'

"He took out of his purse a ten-dollar gold piece, an aztec, as we call it, and raised it above his head. At once a sort of bird, with five wings, rose from the ground. It was my missing hand, which had not been able to resist the

temptation to fly from its hiding place and seize a gold coin."

A second ovation from the guests! And the man with the one arm exploded with laughter at the naughty prank of his missing hand, and, not to be discourteous to its former owner, I laughed as well.

The Ambassador's Missing Watch

"And you never heard how the Spanish Ambassador lost his watch?"

I could see what Obregon was driving at. This story was to be not at his own expense, but against "that other fellow," his enemy and persecutor. However, I pretended to be quite innocent, so that the General could have the pleasure of telling the story.

"A new Minister from Spain had just presented his credentials, and President Carranza was anxious to welcome him with a great official banquet. The thing had to be done well. Spain had been the first European nation to recognize Don Venustiano's Government after the revolution."

As I listened to the hero I thought of the grand dining hall of the palace at Chapultepec,

which recalls the tragic days of Maximilian, the Austrian Emperor of Mexico. I could see Don Venustiano in evening dress, with his white beard and red-white-and-green nose, seated opposite the Spanish Ambassador, and beside the latter, Obregon, Minister of War; Candido Aguilar, Minister of Foreign Relations; the elegant Barragan, in a new uniform bought for the occasion, and all the other dignitaries created by the First Chief.

"Suddenly," continued Obregon, "the Spanish diplomat raised his hand to his vest, and grew pale. 'Caramba!' he exclaimed. 'My watch is gone!' It was an antique timepiece, gold and inset with diamonds, an heirloom in the Ambassador's family.

"Complete silence! First he looks at me, for I am sitting next to him. But I have an arm missing, and, as it happens, on the side nearest the Ambassador. I cannot have taken his watch! Then he looks at Candido Aguilar, Don Venustiano's son-in-law, who is sitting on the other side. Aguilar still has both his arms, but one of his hands, and by chance the one next to the Ambassador, is almost paralyzed. Neither can he be the pick-pocket! Convinced

that he must say good-by forever to his lost jewelry, the Spanish Minister sat out the rest of the meal cursing desperately under his breath.

" 'They have stolen my watch. This is not a Government. This is a den of thieves!'

"When they got up from the table Don Venustiano, with his usual dignified and venerable bearing, stepped up to the Ambassador and whispered, 'Here you are, but say nothing more about it.'

"The diplomat could not contain his astonishment and admiration! 'It was not the man on my right! It was not the man on my left! It was the man across the table in front of me! Oh, my dear Mr. President, quite rightly do they call you the First Chief.' "

If the laughter at a joke on Obregon had been noisy, that for a joke on Carranza resembled a cannonade.

There is no doubt about it. Obregon is an excellent table companion. His amusing chatter is inexhaustible.

Leaving his stories, he went on to the subject of his election campaign. He is as proud

of his speeches as he is of his triumphant battles. The General is a born orator, and like all self-educated men who take up reading late in life, he noticeably prefers the sonorous, theatrical sentence which never says anything.

He invited me to attend one of his election meetings to hear him speak to a crowd. At the moment he had on his mind a great parade which the laborers of the capital were preparing in his honor. It was to be headed by 1,500 Mexican women—all the dressmakers in the city. The women of Mexico feel a purely spiritual inclination toward this plain-speaking soldier, who treats every one as his equal.

He expounded his platform to me volubly: democracy—enforcement of the law—realization of the promises made by the revolution, and which the "old chief" had forgotten—distribution of lands to the poor. The real reason for his candidacy, the argument that has greatest weight with him, he never mentioned, but I could read it in his eyes.

"Besides," Obregon undoubtedly says to himself, "besides, I made Don Venustiano President. I took him in triumph from Vera

Cruz to the Presidential chair in Mexico City. He became President through my efforts. Now it is my turn. Isn't that fair?"

He Is an Author, Too

Since the General had already forgotten his jokes and stories and had now to speak with the seriousness befitting a Chief Executive, he gradually and imperceptibly passed from oratory to literature. The General became a "colleague" of mine, a man of letters. He has written a book telling the story of his campaigns. That has been the custom of all victorious warriors since the time of Julius Cæsar. Why should he not also indulge in a set of "Commentaries"?

He promised to send me a copy of his book. But to forestall the chance that his difficulties with Carranza might prevent him from keeping the promise, he went on to give me an idea of the book in advance.

He said that he expressed himself simply and with modesty. Of course his battles could not be compared with those of the European war. . . . "I also realize that I am only an amateur in the military business, a civilian

forced to take up arms—Citizen Obregon promoted to be a General: and doubtless I had strokes of sheer luck!"

I was listening to Obregon with real affection. I was regarding him as the most attractive and most able man among all the Mexican Generals made by the national upheaval. But suddenly the wind changed. Men never get really to know each other. Obregon began to twirl his sharp-pointed, upturning mustache, and smiling in pride at his own modesty, he lay back on his divan.

"When I was Minister of War, at a banquet at the President's house one day, the Dutch representative, who was a military man, came up to me and said, 'General, from what branch of the service did you come—artillery, cavalry?' In view of my victories he thought I must be a professional soldier. Imagine his astonishment when I told him I had been a chick-pea dealer in Sonora! He refused to believe it."

More About His Great Book

The General stopped a moment to enjoy the impression his words were making on us.

"Another time the German Minister came to see me. You doubtless know him by reputation, Mr. Ibañez."

"Very well indeed," I replied. "He was the fellow who during the late war suggested to the Mexican Government the possibility of recovering California and Arizona. He used to appear at public ceremonies in a great Prussian uniform with decorations, to receive the applause of a paid claque or an ignorant crowd which was always hissing the plain black evening dress of the diplomatic representative of the United States."

"Well," said Obregon, "the German came to see me, and in his short abrupt accent said to me: 'General, I have read your book, and I need two copies of it, one for my Emperor and the other for the archives of the German General Staff. The people back in Berlin are much interested in you. They are astounded that a plain civilian, without military training, has been able to conduct such noteworthy and original campaigns.' "

"I suppose you gave him the books?"

"No, I don't care for honors like that. I told him he could find them in the bookstores

if he wanted them. And I suppose he bought them and sent them on home."

What a farceur that shrewd German was!

The hero doubtless remembered my hatred of German militarism, so to emphasize his impartiality he jumped to the Far East.

"The Japanese Minister also asked my permission to translate the book into Japanese. My campaigns seem to have aroused a good deal of interest over there."

"Has the translation appeared yet?" I inquired.

"I don't know. I don't bother about such matters."

Popular Appeal of a "Bad Man"

A long silence. I sat looking somewhat disconcertedly at this man, so complex for all of his primitive simplicity, who alarms you at one moment by his craftiness and at the next astonishes you by his complete ingenuousness.

Nevertheless, he is the most popular and the most feared man in Mexico, the man everywhere most talked about. Some people love him to the extent that they would die for him. Others hate him and would like to kill him,

as they remember the barbarous outrages he ordered in the early days of the triumphant revolution, actuated by some perverse whim of his very original character.

He appeals to the multitude for his somewhat rustic frankness, his good-natured wickedness and his rather brutal gayety. He has, besides, the prestige of a courage which no one questions, and of an aggressiveness, in a pinch, like that of a wild boar at bay. To cap the climax, he has lost an arm.

My readers must pardon me for emphasizing this latter point. In Mexico such things are more important than elsewhere. The people in Mexico, who are ready to take up guns and kill each other at a moment's notice and most of the time without knowing why, are very sentimental and easily moved to tears. Mexicans give up their lives with the greatest indifference and for anybody at all. At the same time they will weep at the slightest annoyance occasioned to one of their loved heroes. The Mexican populace descends from the Aztecs, those magnificent gardeners who lovingly cultivated flowers and, at the same time, tore the hearts out of a thousand living prisoners at

each of their religious festivals. Poetry and blood, sentimentality and death! It is a pity that Obregon's lost arm did not actually leave its hiding place to seize the gold "aztec" which the General's aid held out to it, in the story! It would have been worshiped by the people with national honors.

Value of an Amputated Leg

There are precedents for this. General Santa Ana was an Obregon in his day. Though the latter has never been President yet, the former reached the Presidency several times through uprisings or manipulated elections. The Mexican people hated Santa Ana after his unsuccessful campaign against the secessionists, who had established a republic in Texas. The Texans defeated his army and made him prisoner. However, at that moment, it occurred to the French Government of Louis Philippe to send a military expedition into Mexico to enforce some diplomatic demands, and French soldiers disembarked in Vera Cruz. Santa Ana rushed to oppose them, and the last shot the invaders fired hit him in the leg, and the surgeons had to amputate it.

Never did a popularity rise to such pure and exalted heights. Santa Ana's leg, properly pickled, was taken from Vera Cruz to Mexico City with a great guard of honor. The Government bestowed on the amputated limb the honors of a Captain General killed in battle, and in the midst of triumphal pageantry, the booming of cannon and the music of bands, it was buried in the center of the city under a great monument.

However, reversals of opinion and sudden waves of anger must be looked for in sentimental peoples. Years later Santa Ana went to war with the United States over the Texas affair. The campaign went against him and the Americans took Mexico City. The people needed to vent its wrath on somebody, and since it could not get its hands on Santa Ana, it tore down the monument to his heroic leg, paraded the unfortunate bone through the streets of the city and finally threw it into a dung heap.

His Threats Not "Celestial Music"

Obregon spoke to me about a friend of his, a newspaper man, some of whose articles were

worthy of admiration. "He is ill," said the General, "and practically dying. He has been in bed for several months. He would be delighted if you would pay him a visit."

The General and I agreed to go together. "I am going to see the silver mines at Pachuca to-morrow," I said. "I shall be away two days."

"When you come back I shall still be here," said the General. "All that talk about the old man's prosecuting me and putting me in jail is just celestial music (Mexican for 'hot air'). We shall see each other. I'll give you my book and we'll go and see my friend."

When I got back the General had disappeared. He had fled from the city not to return till just now, when he comes back as a conqueror.

Obregon did well to get away when he did. The threats of "the old man" were not music. A few hours later Carranza would have had him locked up.

Carranza told me so himself the last time I saw him.

IV. THE REAL AUTHOR OF CARRANZA'S DOWNFALL

THE third candidate for the Presidency of the republic, Don Pablo Gonzalez, is a personage who has been thrown into the background, apparently, by the kaleidoscopic personality and overwhelming popularity of Obregon.

I did not meet General Gonzalez. He is not the type of man that inspires you with an irrepressible desire to know him, as is the case with his rival Obregon and other characters of the Mexican revolution. The personality of Don Pablo is elusive; it escapes the pursuit of the observer however much the latter may concentrate his attention on seizing it. His pictures exhibit him as a man of dark complexion, with very black and bushy brows and mustache, and wearing dark-colored glasses that hide his eyes. This last detail must have given many

an anxious moment to Pancho Villa, who was so worried by the blue spectacles of Don Venustiano.

Not a few people in Mexico consider Don Pablo an expert in the great art of dissimulation, and they aver that General Gonzalez wears dark glasses to prevent the indiscreet from reading his thoughts in his eyes. I know some friends of Don Pablo who swear that he is an honest man. I know likewise a great many enemies of his who picture him as a fraud, a hypocrite and a crook, adding that his supposed kindness is mere sham and that he has behind him a personal record full of deeds that cannot bear close scrutiny.

The military history of this man is amazing.

"General Gonzalez commanded the largest forces in the revolution and he came out of it with the unique honor of having lost every battle in which he was engaged." Thus was Gonzalez described to me by President Carranza and his most intimate friends on one occasion when I was questioning them about the personality of this chief.

And Don Venustiano added with what seemed to me mock seriousness: "But Don

Pablo inspires so much confidence; he is so respectable . . .''

I came to the conclusion that the most conspicuous rôle played by General Gonzalez in Mexican life has been that of a kindly man who inspires confidence, although his enemies protest that he has never been either kind or trustworthy.

One of the Few Dons Left

The people who speak of Obregon familiarly and call nearly all the revolutionary personages by their last names, can never mention General Gonzalez without prefixing to his name the title of Don. Gonzalez is always Don Pablo, just as Carranza is Don Venustiano and Diaz was Don Porfirio. Aside from these three, there are no more Dons in Mexico. No one would think of calling General Obregon Don Alvaro; he is too democratic.

When Obregon and Don Pablo were campaigning independently under the government of Carranza to win the elections for the Presidency, public opinion swung around in a rather unexpected manner. The conservative elements, the law-abiding citizens, and the re-

ligious classes had to choose a candidate and they all instinctively turned to Don Pablo.

This same Don Pablo had shown little respect for the rights of property when he was in command of troops. He had executed many people openly, and his enemies accused him of having indirectly caused the death of others. Moreover, in religious matters he had never given proof of definite and positive faith. But all the cautious citizens who were alarmed by the exuberant aggressiveness of Obregon took pains to forget the dubious history of Don Pablo, and they rallied around him, repeating always the same slogan: "Vote for Don Pablo; he is safe and sane! Vote for the man who thinks twice before he speaks!"

There are people who instinctively follow the man who does not talk, in the belief that silence is the sign of all wisdom; just as there are others who are captivated only by those who talk a great deal and loudly.

Why Don Pablo Is Rich

According to his enemies, in his youth Don Pablo Gonzalez was a peon in a factory at $20 a month. To-day he is considered one of the

richest men in Mexico, both in real estate and personal property. How did he work the miracle?

By becoming a General. The reader must neither laugh nor give this statement a false interpretation. To be a General in Mexico means a great deal more, from a pecuniary standpoint, than it does in any other country on earth, however rich the country may be. It must be understood, of course, that by General I mean one in command of troops; because the General not in command of troops in Mexico is a poor devil who draws a miserable salary (when it is not withheld under accusation of disloyalty to the Government) and whose only hope of advancement lies in a new revolution that may give him command of a few regiments.

Military administration, as it is organized in all modern countries, does not exist in Mexico. The chief in command of troops receives directly from the Government the money needed for their maintenance, and he distributes it as he pleases. The President of the Republic takes good care not to ask him for explanations, nor is an accounting ever demanded. Such an offensive curiosity on the

part of the President would be deemed intolerable by the gentleman in command of the troops, and he would protest against it by rising in arms against the constituted authority.

This is the reason why a General in active service does not need to violate the rights of private property to increase his income. All he has to do is to keep a portion of the money sent him by the Government. The worst of it is that the majority of the Mexican Generals are two-handed, as Obregon put it, and while they loot the public treasury with one hand, to keep the other busy they pick the pockets of private individuals.

Every corps commander receives at the end of each month a large sum of money, thousands of dollars, to pay for his cavalry fodder. The commander pockets the money and immediately issues an order to have the horses put to graze in private meadows. This business of paying for fodder may be the proper thing in Europe where army horses cannot be sent to graze in private fields without loud protest.

Then there are the men. The Mexican armies treble and quadruple when they figure on paper in the Treasury of the Ministry of War; and

they dwindle astonishingly when the pay is actually handed out. The General who certifies that he has ten battalions under his orders does not have in reality more than ten skeletons of battalions. Colonels and Captains, in their turn, do the same when they report about their units. All of them eat rations and receive pay for soldiers who do not exist.

This is by no means an innovation, and cannot be charged to the Government created by the revolution. Such practice has been the rule in Mexico from the earliest days of the republic and it constitutes a national evil that no one has dared to extirpate. Don Porfirio himself, despite his autocratic character and his thirty years of domination, during which there seemed to be no other will in the country than his own, was forced, nevertheless, to tolerate this abuse, and never dared to stop it, although he must undoubtedly have known that it existed.

Until I visited Mexico I could not account for the amazing rapidity with which President Diaz was defeated and driven from power. He had an army, a real, modern army, similar to that of any powerful nation. His regiments were

well dressed, well equipped and well organized. His officers used to go for practical training to the best military schools of the Old World. In fact, the regimental bands of some of his crack corps would occasionally go to Europe and participate with distinction in international band tournaments.

His Generals were professional men who had entered the army to make it their life work. They were men specially trained in the science and art of war, and they knew a great deal more about military matters than all the improvised *guerrilleros* whom the revolution later honored with the title of General put together.

And yet, as soon as the visionary Madero changed from preaching to action, and took the field with his undisciplined hordes who knew as much about war as he did—and he knew nothing—the entire Federal Army collapsed in short order. The country had believed in good faith that the Mexican Army consisted of a hundred thousand men. The people of Mexico City saw that the garrison was not very numerous, but they said: "The main body is in Guadalajara." The people in Guadalajara were sure the bulk of the army was in Puebla,

and the people in Puebla placed it in Vera Cruz. Thus one great nucleus after another was "organized," and everybody was sure a gigantic army was on hand, though it existed really only in the purses of the Generals commissioned to manage the phantom.

The only person probably who had precise knowledge of the truth was old Diaz; but he did not consider a popular uprising as within the range of possibility. He never dreamed that Madero, whom he took for a crazy young chap, could ever put a revolution through. The only danger that occurred to him was an attempt of the Generals to revolt, the way he himself had risen against the President of his time. It was in view of such a contingency that he was willing to wink at everything, letting his Generals steal to their hearts' content.

Of the 100,000 men for years and years provided for in the Mexican war budget Diaz's Generals, recognized experts in strategy, could put in the field only 14,000, in addition to the detached corps kept as garrisons in the big towns. That is the sole explanation of the rapidity with which Diaz was overthrown and of the sad rôle played by an army which he

had showered with attentions, favors and good pay for thirty years, the moment it came in contact with the disorganized mobs of the revolution.

The Verb "to Carranza"

As I remarked, Don Pablo Gonzalez has been in command of larger contingents of men, in times of peace as well as in times of war, than any other General of the revolution. His enemies keep busy, therefore, computing the height of the mountains of forage he has consumed and the number of thousands of soldiers the General has recruited in his own imagination.

Such malicious speculations, which may be quite erroneous, though they appear in part justified by the unexplainable fortune of Don Pablo, are not surprising. What man of prominence in Mexico has not been accused of graft? The Mexican people is fond of broad generalizations. To save itself the annoyance of making nice distinctions it includes everybody in one sweeping judgment and calls "thief" after all the people ever connected with the Government.

The venerable Carranza has not escaped such charges by any means. They call him the "First Chief . . . of those who come in the night." Long ago the wags of the capital began to use a new verb, "to carranza," the exact humor of which may not appear in English. "To carranza," in the cafés and vaudeville theaters of Mexico City, means "to steal," and you can hear people conjugating it on every hand: "I carranza, thou carranzest, he carranzas—they all carranza."

For my own part, I believe that such charges are unfounded. They spring from the intense passions of politics. Of all the men around him, Don Venustiano is the one who comes from a comfortable social station. Not enormously rich, to be sure, he has never known what poverty is. Before he threw himself into the revolution he was a country land owner, a rancher, with a fine piece of property and splendid herds. Carranza has defects, but among them I should not be inclined to place an exaggerated appetite for money. What he wants is power, control over men, the privilege of being first wherever he is. And when

such an ambition is dominant in people it does not leave them time for making money; but it often induces an otherwise honest man to tolerate, and even to protect, the thieving of others.

Don Venustiano had to keep the people about him satisfied. He was anxious to gather round him all those who might eventually be of use to him as men of combat. Himself a man of unbending pride, he had to swallow the insolence and foster the vices of his retainers. Under his protecting wing a great deal of stealing went on. There is no question about that. At times the old rancher, remembering how angry he used to get when somebody stole one of his cows, would rise in his wrath, and talk of having the whole crowd of grafters shot. A moment's thought, however, was enough to remind him that in that case he might be left all alone. He would end by coming to an understanding with the culprit he had caught. If Carranza had insisted on the strict enforcement of the moral code he would have fallen long before he did. More probably, he would never have become President at all.

Story of the Diplomat's New Auto

People in Mexico City told me a story of his first days in office when he had just entered the capital as conqueror. A diplomatic representative had come to pay his respects to the President, and left a splendid automobile which he had just bought, in the court yard of the Executive Mansion. On going out after the interview the diplomat looked for his beautifully painted car in vain. The soldiers of the Presidential Guard relieved his anxiety. One of the most loyal—and most feared—Generals of the President had got into the car and ordered the chauffeur to drive off.

The diplomat thought some mistake had been made and reported the matter to Don Venustiano. The President immediately sent an Adjutant to the barracks, where the General, to keep in closer contact with a regiment of soldiers from the provinces who followed him blindly everywhere, was living. The Presidential emissary could not have been welcomed more warmly.

"Say, go back and tell the old man," thun-

dered the rustic Mars, "that I have been looking for an automobile like that for a long time, and I am going to keep it. What does he think we made the revolution for? What does he think we made him President for? And if he doesn't like that, tell him to come and get this flivver himself . . . and I will lick the stuffing out of him."

Don Venustiano is a man of some "pep" himself. When he got that message he flew into a rage and started toward the door as though he really meant to go and get the automobile in person. But then he stopped and began to stroke his white flowing beard. "After all, I am President of the republic . . ." So he ordered another automobile, exactly like the one the diplomat had lost, and had it sent to the legation.

Don Pablo Gonzalez was the man really responsible for President Carranza's fall. The "old man" always had the highest esteem for the General and gave him the best commands in the army. But the perpetual "General in Active Service" wanted to become President; and since Carranza, with his characteristic

stubbornness, insisted on pushing the candidacy of Bonillas, Don Pablo finished by becoming the President's enemy.

While I was still in Mexico, and a long time after Obregon placed himself in open revolt, the General was maintaining a doubtful attitude toward what was going on. No one thought it possible that Don Pablo would ever start an uprising himself. But it was just as far from everybody's thought that he would ever favor a rebellion started by some one else.

Don Pablo is not the kind of man to strike the first blow. Respectable, prudent people never do such things. They leave it to the Obregons. But the General is the sort of person quite willing to strike the second blow, when his enemy, thrown off his balance, is least expecting attack from a new direction. Gonzalez is a man who looks before he leaps —but he leaps at the right moment.

Had it not been for the intervention of this respectable and prudent chieftain on the side of the rebellion Carranza would be still, at the present moment, in his mansion in Mexico City, giving orders to faithful Generals to combat Obregon and Obregon's partisans.

How Carranza's Plans Went Awry

The history of the recent overturn, which has not yet come to a close, may be summarized briefly as follows: Carranza tried to impose his candidate Bonillas on Mexico as a whole, planning then to overwhelm Sonora, where the center of the Obregonist movement was located. In Sonora an active campaign against the President was on foot, but before all the preparations were complete Carranza started to nag the rebellious State and trample on its autonomous rights. His purpose was to provoke a premature explosion of the revolutionary magazine.

Sonora finally rose in revolt, and Carranza in his turn caught Obregon off guard, and was thinking of putting the General in a safe place, at a time when, as he thought, the Presidential orders would still be respected. However, Obregon got away, and his partisans in the army began to mutiny, but obviously without collusion with one another and with an indisputable lack of unity. It was a spontaneous uprising, every one acting on his own initiative, as happens in a powerful party, which, at a

surprise attack from the enemy, feels itself suddenly in danger of checkmate and has to move before its plans are all laid.

Meanwhile, Carranza was getting a large body of troops together in the neighborhood of the capital. He sent his son-in-law, Candido Aguilar, to raise additional contingents in Vera Cruz and create a place of refuge for himself, in case of need, in that stronghold. Carranza did the same thing some years ago, when he was expelled from Mexico City by Villa and Zapata.

I cannot affirm that Carranza would have been triumphant in the end. It is almost certain that Obregon would have won eventually, since the present revolution has been of a purely military character, and the majority of the army officers are strongly attached to their former Minister of War.

But the campaign started badly for Obregon. The first encounters between the insurrectionists and the Government troops were indecisive. The struggle between Carranza and Obregon promised to become something more than a mutiny. It was beginning to look like a long war that might last months and even years.

At this moment another person came on the scene, much as on the stage, a character who has been forgotten in the first act, suddenly appears in the last to say the deciding word in the drama. It was the respectable, the prudent Don Pablo Gonzalez. The blow that this kindly gentleman struck Carranza between the eyes had real punch behind it.

Of all the thousands of soldiers that the President was collecting around the capital, the large units actually organized happened to have been all under the command of Don Pablo. What troops in the Mexican Army, for that matter, have not been commanded by this gentleman in the course of his long and remunerative military experience?

Mutiny at the Bedside

General Gonzalez slipped out of the city one night when Carranza had Obregon only on his mind and caused the larger part of his forces to mutiny. One might think that the crime of mutiny would necessarily be the same under one chief as under another. And yet such is not the case. The seriousness of the crime depends upon the name of the leader. Mutiny

under Obregon meant certain execution for the soldier should he chance to fall into Carranza's hands. Mutiny under Don Pablo was something much less serious. It had an air of good form about it. It smacked of social life. It was a sort of parlor frolic. So the battalions which Carranza had mobilized raised no objection to following Don Pablo. "That man knows what he is about. He knows which way the wind is blowing! We can't go wrong if we go with him!"

Sonora was a long way from Mexico City, and the States which Obregon had to traverse were not much nearer. A lot of ground would have to be covered and many skirmishes would have to be fought. It would be a long time before the insurrection reached the capital.

But the respectable and prudent Don Pablo, rising in mutiny almost at the foot of Carranza's bed, made an unexpected and dramatic move, which threw Government expectations into confusion within a few hours.

When Don Venustiano tried to retire to Vera Cruz it was already too late. Don Pablo had blocked the road. Puebla, moreover, is the key to the Mexico City-Vera Cruz line, and Puebla

happens to be the only city where Gonzalez really has a following. Puebla by tradition is a reactionary, religiously minded city. It sympathizes with Don Pablo for lack of a man more to its taste. Around the churches in Puebla I saw a number of election posters with the words, "If you want religion to be respected, if you want peace, vote for Don Pablo Gonzalez."

Thanks to the kindly enterprise of this apparently reliable man, Carranza, who thought himself still powerful, had to flee on a moment's notice, and, as a result, is now a wanderer in the mountains.

His Removal of Zapata

Such *coups* are not without precedent in the life of Gonzalez. Six months or more ago he decided to have done with the rebel Zapata, and he made good in his design. Gonzalez has never won a battle; but when it comes to removing a nuisance from his path, a man whom he is tired of, and when it comes to doing so cleanly, thoroughly and quickly, Don Pablo has no rivals.

Even the warmest friends of the Government, and people who lost no love whatever on

Zapata, were obliged to protest at the cowardly manner in which Don Pablo disposed of him. As the story goes he had one of his confidential agents, a *guerrillero,* desert to Zapata with several men. Zapata was suspicious of the new arrivals and asked their leader to do something spectacular against the Government troops. Don Pablo, accordingly, arranged for one of his detachments to be surprised by the bandits of his agent, who, to convince Zapata of his good faith, had all the prisoners taken shot. Zapata, in fact, fell into the trap, and soon after he was led into an ambuscade and shot down in cold blood.

Thus the heroic Don Pablo was able to add to the list of his achievements the death of Zapata, which many other Generals had tried to accomplish in vain.

Such a kindly man! And so respectable! A man you can rely on! Now, after the fall of Don Venustiano, he and Obregon are marching side by side—for the moment. But Obregon is a literary man, you will remember. He is fond of phrases. I can imagine him saying of his new comrade in arms: "His kindness fills me with terror."

A Militant Pacifist

One of the most amusing spectacles during the months preceding the present revolution was the mania of all the militarists in Mexico for "civilism" or "civilianism."

Bonillas was the candidate of "civilism," though his leading supporters before the public, Candido Aguilar and Montes, were Generals.

The other candidates, Obregon and Gonzalez, insisted, however, that they were just as much civilians as the pacific Bonillas.

"There are no militarists, there is no militarism, in this country of ours," Obregon would say in his Ciceronian manner. "The professional soldier died with the fall of Don Porfirio. We are men of the people, simple citizens, who took up arms to defend the cause of the revolution. Now with the triumph of that revolution, we lay down our arms and become men like other men."

And Don Pablo, who thinks there is wisdom in few words, said simply:

"Amen."

Not only that. The fiery Obregon, ex-Minister of War that he was, asked the Government

to give him an honorable discharge from the army, and he pretended to get angry when any one addressed him as "General." He insisted on being nothing but "Citizen Obregon, *garbanzo* King of Sonora."

But Don Pablo did not say "amen" to this. Don Pablo went on being a General, although he was sure his army would never be large enough to suit his tastes. Since it would have been hardly appropriate to call himself "Citizen Gonzalez, proprietor and gentleman," he contented himself with making his General's uniform look as pacifistic as possible.

During the elections he spent almost as much money on pictures of himself as the Government wasted on the face of Bonillas. Every bare wall in the Mexican towns carried a portrait of Don Pablo, with his heavy eyebrows, his bushy mustache, and those disturbing eyes, which, for the first time, were not obscured by the pair of dark glasses. Underneath the picture there was a single word, and, that the illiterate peasants might understand it better, it was written in Latin: "Pax."

In one of the principal theaters of Mexico, a musical revue was given, in which Bonillas was

made to appear as the shepherdess "Flor de Te," and Obregon made a speech about his *garbanzos* and his eagerness to become President "even if he had to use the Big Stick to get there." But Don Pablo came on in the last act, and in the most comic fashion. He wore a battle uniform. He had a scowl on his face. Black eye-glasses and an enormous mustache added to the ferocity of his appearance. Dragging an enormous cannon behind him, he advanced toward the footlights, and there, in a voice which was more like the roar of a hungry lion ready to eat the audience, he shouted: "I am a pacifist."

"Civilism," "peace," all mere hypocrisy! "Citizen" Obregon has remained a General, and General Gonzalez, the man of peace, has played another of the treacherous tricks in which he is a specialist. The moment Carranza, their former chief and master, decided to give the Presidency to some one else, both of these men became militarists again, coming to a momentary agreement, but without prejudice to their privilege of fighting each other to-morrow. Mexico had to have one more revolution! There have been so few of them in her history!

V. CARRANZA'S OFFICIAL FAMILY

OF all the men who figured prominently in Mexico during the last years of the Carranza régime—including those who remained faithful to the First Chief and those who rebelled against him—Carranza came originally from the highest social station.

While the present Generals and Ministers of the republic were still humble laborers, petty merchants, obscure lawyers, or simply loafers without visible means of support, Carranza had already been, first, a Senator and, later, a State Governor. A silent and reserved man who seemed to foresee his future greatness, Don Venustiano moved for many years in General Diaz's entourage, which eventually came to have all the characteristics of a real Court.

It is interesting to study the portraits of Porfirio Diaz at the various periods of his career. In the earliest ones he looks like an Indian with sharp-pointed pyramidal skull, coarse hair and rough features. As the thirty years of his rule

wear on, he shows gradual but constant improvement. At the end the Indian had turned white. He always wore a simple but elegant uniform. It was common gossip that he employed expert Parisian specialists to paint his lips and whiten his cheeks.

The society that surrounded Don Porfirio underwent a similar transformation. The official functions given during Diaz's régime eventually became as important and ostentatious as those given in some of the regal Courts of Europe. A Mexican aristocracy grew up around President Diaz. In diplomatic circles the balls held in the Mexican capital were reputed to be the best given in America. I met in Paris the owner of a famous restaurant who had at one time been Don Porfirio's chef.

"He is a real sovereign," the old chef told me. "I don't believe there has been, since the days of Napoleon III., a ruler able to give a banquet as well as he or with as much pomp and ceremony."

The Aristocratic Carranza

Carranza's association with this republican Court had its effect on him, as it did on so many

other political personages whom Diaz converted into barons, as it were, of his empire. Don Venustiano is a man from the country, a *ranchero,* but despite this origin, he has a noble bearing and easy and distinguished manners, which show that he is used to moving in good society. He always dresses in black and goes about from the early morning hours in a frock coat. Although this gives him the appearance of a magistrate or a professor, he looks more distinguished than all the young men around him, who affect the latest fashions with all the exaggeration and discord of color characteristic of the creole.

The figure of Don Venustiano helps to create this good impression. He is majestically tall, muscular and strong despite his years; and above all, he is white, pure white. His Spanish ancestors came from the Basque Provinces and from the Basques he inherited the vigorous health and the silent tenacity of that race. As I have already stated, there is one somewhat grotesque detail in his face—a swollen nose with a network of multi-colored veins. But this does not show at a distance. The majesty of his white flowing beard and the vigor of his

splendid stature, which gives him the appearance of an old warrior, seem to hide the defect. He reminds you of the conquerors who, three centuries ago, after the conquest of Mexico, laid aside their armor to devote themselves to the development of the mines and the tilling of the soil.

When the revolution made this frock-coated man take the field and assume the command of troops, he turned out to be a first-class strategist, from the standpoint of Mexican conditions. He always refused to be a General, but the boys whom he elevated to that rank never failed to ask for his advice or to follow his suggestions.

I have heard many of them tell of the military talent of the man whom they called the First Chief. In the middle of the night, when they were fast asleep, he would order them, swearing and protesting, to break camp and take up another position. He had suspected a move from the enemy and, sure enough, the enemy would come; but instead of surprising Carranza, it would be surprised by the First Chief. Like all men born in the country who have made long journeys on horseback driving herds of cattle, he can read the stars and pre-

dict the weather. He knows every irregularity in the ground of the whole territory.

A Fighter Who Won't Quit

As I write these lines Carranza is giving proof of his qualities as a mountain fighter. Betrayed by almost all his old friends, surrounded by enemy forces, his retreat to Vera Cruz completely cut off, and the last remnants of his loyal troops dispersed, any other man would have surrendered resignedly to his fate. But the principal virtue of Carranza is his tenacity; a tenacity that conquers time and space and mocks fate. It is more than probable that his enemies, infinitely more numerous than his escort, will eventually capture him.

At any rate, whether Carranza is captured or succeeds in breaking through the ring which his enemies have thrown around him, we have to admit that he has defended himself against ill-luck in a heroic manner. This man of 64, his followers reduced to a mere handful, can ride whole days without yielding to the exhaustion of age. He will fight at odds of a hundred to one. If his horse is killed under him, he immediately mounts another, calmly

facing a rain of bullets fired by the very men who swore loyalty to him. The days are passing, and his enemies have not yet succeeded in capturing him.

However great his mistakes may have been, we must concede that Carranza is a man of extraordinary energy and determination.

Carranza's Court

What we might call Carranza's Court, his intimate circle, had a rather informal and familiar aspect. It was something like the coterie of a provincial Governor who has become President, without giving up his old habits of country life.

Next to General Barragan, youthful and debonair, the man whom Don Venustiano treated with greatest intimacy was the major domo of his palaces, Don Pancho Serna. This Don Pancho, like nearly all the men of the revolutionary epoch, was of very humble origin. He had a small popular restaurant in the outskirts of Mexico City and, overnight, Don Venustiano made him Governor of the Presidential Mansion, of the Palace of Chapultepec,

and of a third residence located in the fortress of San Juan de Ulua in Vera Cruz.

The former restaurant keeper, a jovial man accustomed to flattering his patrons, kept his old good humor, changing only his manner of dress to meet the demands of his new dignity. Every morning, the minute he tumbled out of bed, he put on his frock coat. His position did not permit him to dress in any other way. The only garment that he varied with any frequency was his vest, of silk or velvet, as the case might be, but always in brilliantly colored checks. Over it he always wore a rich gold chain.

As long as Señora Carranza lived, Don Pancho Serna's star did not rise to its full glory. The first lady of the land had no use for the major domo. But when Don Venustiano's wife died eight months ago the major domo became the absolute master of the Presidential Palaces and of the President's affection.

The Master of the Banquet Table

The former restaurateur always sat at the Presidential table no matter how formal the banquet might be, and we must confess that he did not look out of place among the guests;

because he confined himself to smiling discreetly and nodding his approval to everything that was said. After the dinner, prompted by professional instinct, as if he were still in charge of his old restaurant, he would always try to find out if the guests were satisfied with the service. I remember that on one occasion at the end of a luncheon I attended with President Carranza in the Palace of Chapultepec, Don Pancho led me aside to ask me what I thought of the luncheon. His was the anxiety of an artist who fears for the success of his work with a critic come from foreign parts.

"It was splendid, Don Pancho," I replied. "The best restaurants on the Parisian boulevards cannot put up a better meal."

You should have seen the seraphic smile of Don Pancho. At that moment I must have seemed to him the most agreeable man on earth.

After that he showed me the rooms of the Chapultepec palace, furnished during Emperor Maximilian's reign. As the monarch's reign was very brief, there is nothing extraordinary about the furnishings. All they have is a few porcelains and pieces of furniture given by Napoleon III. But Don Pancho has never been

outside of Mexico and he asked me, with a doubtful air, if the palaces of Europe had rooms as beautiful as those of Chapultepec.

"I am dying to go to Madrid to see its museums and to admire the pictures of the famous painter *Belasco.*"

Don Pancho spoke to me frequently about this unknown painter with great enthusiasm.

"Who the deuce can this man Belasco be?" I asked myself. And it was long afterward that it dawned on me that Don Pancho was thinking of Velazquez.

There is no doubt, however, that Don Venustiano's major domo is a man of exquisite taste. Everybody in Mexico City talked to me about the residence he is building for himself in the most handsome park in the capital. It is a house in colonial style of very considerable proportions. Such are the mysteries of Mexico! Six years ago this man was nothing but the keeper of a popular restaurant on the outskirts of the city. Now he owns an artistic mansion in a location corresponding to Central Park in New York. His enemies explain the transformation by the fact that the President had given him a monopoly of all the meals

served in the dining cars on the Mexican railways. The privilege, certainly, was not out of keeping with Don Pancho's previous occupation. However, the story was not true.

A "Carranza Doctrine" (Subsidized)

Carranza, people assert, disposed of this dining-car business, in order to reward the literary labors of a young lady (a former stenographer or telegraph clerk, I don't remember which) who is his favorite author. The girl placed herself under his orders early in the revolution and went with him everywhere.

This young "lady of letters" invented, and expounded in several volumes, the so-called "Carranza Doctrine." Monroe had his doctrine! Why shouldn't Carranza have one, too? Just as Obregon, aspiring to be an author as well as a warrior, wrote the story of his campaigns, Carranza, to go down in history as something more than a President, entered the field of international law. However, he was not a writer. The young lady wielded the pen, while the "old man" revised the text, made suggestions and furnished ideas.

The world has paid no attention to the "doc-

trine," but the lady who expounded it has derived no end of profit from it. She receives subsidies to propagate the Carranzist philosophy all over the continent; and the privilege, moreover, of feeding travelers on the trains of Mexico.

The dear señorita! I remember my journey from the frontier to the capital. All the food is canned, and canned goods seem to be classified, in Mexico, like wines. The older, the better! It took me several days to get over my ptomaine and the resulting indigestion. The "Carranza doctrine" may be all right, but they should not charge so much for it.

Fortunes in Revolution Making

In Mexico nobody is surprised at great fortunes rapidly made. But recently "good business" has not been so common, and such successes have been confined exclusively to men connected with the Government. "You ought to have seen the early days of the revolution!" many people said to me. "That was the time when money was made!" People got rich not only at home in Mexico, but by doing business with Mexico from the United States. Many

Mexicans made millions without leaving New York.

The moment of greatest prosperity was what may be called the second period of the revolution, when Villa, Zapata and others were controlling the north of the republic, while Carranza held the south. There was also a third section of the country, Yucatan, where General Alvarado, Carranza's agent, was exercising a Socialist dictatorship on his own account, and, in the clutch of an attack of graphophobia, was legislating for everything human and divine in literally hundreds of decrees that he composed each day.

At that time, they say, there were three agencies in New York, run by influential Mexicans, some of whom were with Villa, others with Carranza and others with Alvarado. I do not believe that any one of these leaders made anything out of the New York agencies. They complied, out of political camaraderie, with the requests the agencies made of them. The Mexican landowner expelled from Mexico would turn, the moment he ran out of money on Broadway, to the agency representing the part of

the country where his property was located.

Confiscation was the terrible weapon of the Mexican revolution. Some of these confiscations were made at the expense of political enemies of the triumphant régime, but more often they fell upon private individuals, who had taken no part whatever in politics and whose only crime was that of owning something. It was quite proper to solve the social problem by dividing the land of the rich among the poor! And those who held that doctrine began by seizing the lands of the wealthy. Several years have passed, however, and the poor still own very little land! Property would lie around, under a decree of seizure, in the hands of Government employees or Generals who, country people for the most part, had a good idea of what land was worth. The former owners would apply to one of these agencies for the recovery of their lands, and they would put up thousands of dollars to get back their titles, with permission to return to the country.

How One Profiteer Explained It

Then there was brokerage! All sorts of secret deals were made between the Ministry of

Ways and Means in Mexico and business men in the United States, and enormous commissions were paid to the intermediaries. I know, and everybody in Mexico knows, a gentleman who six years ago was what they called a *pelado,* a "down-and-out," and who to-day owns a splendid house in New York. This change in luck was so rapid, so astonishing, so brazen, that Don Venustiano himself got his eye on the man, who was summoned to Mexico to explain his mysterious prosperity. The "old man" was in an ugly humor and talked of jail and the firing squad, if necessary, for the grafters. But the accused gentleman calmly justified himself:

"Mr. President, you have never been out of Mexico. You have never been in the United States. That's why you don't understand my making a fortune in a few years. I have friends in New York who boosted me, that's all. In New York you go to the theater, and your neighbor in the next seat is a millionaire. He takes a fancy to you and lets you in on something that makes you a wealthy man in a few weeks."

He talked so well that Don Venustiano began to think New York must be a city where

everybody is rich and where you cannot walk down Lower Broadway without stubbing your toe on a million-dollar roll.

Another personage in Carranza's entourage was Aguirre Berlanga, Minister of the Interior. This country lawyer held that confidential post a long time without any one's knowing why. Some unexplainable caprice of the President! . . .

The noteworthy thing in Berlanga's record was that he had been the most ardent pro-German in Mexico. All the men in the Government were pro-Germans, but he surpassed them all in this respect, and that is the only respect in which he ever surpassed anybody his whole life long.

The job of this humdrum and ignorant lawyer as Minister of the Interior was to supervise subsidies to the newspapers. It is well known that a part of the Mexican press is supported by the Government and changes policy as rapidly as Governments themselves change. During the years of the war, the Minister of the Interior devoted all his money and all his influence to sustaining the pro-German papers

and persecuting the few dailies which sympathized with the cause of the Allies.

On my travels through Mexico I met many people who had sided with the cause of world freedom during the war. But they were writers and teachers, people who follow intellectual professions and hold quite aloof from politics. The politicians and Generals were all pro-German, with one exception—Don Pablo Gonzalez. That far-sighted gentleman predicted the victory of the Allies from the very first, while his less-intelligent comrades, who call themselves revolutionaries and Socialists, were wrapped in admiration for the glory and ability of William Hohenzollern.

Carranza's "Neutrality"

Carranza, who had never been abroad, who knew the world only second hand and was under the influence of a daring intriguer, the German Minister resident in Mexico, acted badly and deceitfully in every matter relating to the war. He tried to justify all he did on the plea of neutrality, a very special kind of neutrality, which was never anything more than a disguise for favoritism toward Germany. Many will re-

member his note to the neutral nations asking them to agree not to furnish food or goods of any kind to any of the belligerents. Since Germany had been swept off the sea and could get nothing from distant nations, Carranza's proposal could logically serve only to keep supplies from the Allies.

However, let us not dwell on that. There is no occasion to-day for insisting on Carranza's past pro-Germanism. What many people cannot explain is his retention, up to the very last, of Aguirre Berlanga as Minister of the Interior. This insignificant lawyer and kowtower to the Germans is a young chap who listens to himself when he talks; and he talks on every question under the sun, treating them all with the same competence. His importunateness, lack of tact, and assertive ignorance, as well as the unfriendliness that met him everywhere, became long ago proverbial in Mexico.

The Chamber of Deputies was constituted in great majority by friends of Carranza. Well, whenever the President wanted a law passed it was sufficient for Berlanga to support it, for everybody to vote against it. When the Carranza majority was most compact one speech

by that gentleman was enough to split it into factions. Nevertheless, when people talked to Don Venustiano about his Minister of the Interior the "old man's" eyes would twinkle shrewdly, a smile would flit over his bewhiskered face, and he would come to Berlanga's support.

Why He Stood by Berlanga

It was a case of personal vanity. Men of strong will, men who delight in power, like to surround themselves with nonentities to use as mirrors for the reflection of their own delightful greatness. "What a great man am I to have made a somebody out of that idiot!" Carranza doubtless felt like the Roman Emperor who made his horse a Consul.

I owe one courtesy to Don Venustiano, for which I should thank him here. He invited me to luncheon with the most prominent of his assistants and friends, and omitted his Minister of the Interior from the list of guests. It occurred to him, perhaps, that I should not care to sit at table with the representative of German interests in Mexico who supervised all the intrigues there against the European Allies and

the United States of America. Or perhaps, to avoid seeing me laugh at a man in his Ministry, he preferred to take no chances on any ineptitudes Berlanga might get off in his pedantic tone during the meal.

I have been constantly wondering what can have happened to Aguirre Berlanga during these last days. Did he slip off to a safe place, or did some noble impulse prompt him to stand by his patron in time of misfortune? Then, again, I cannot help laughing when I think of a queer kind of popularity that Berlanga enjoyed. When a Mexican tried to estimate the stupidity of anybody, he would invariably say: "He is a bigger fool than the Minister of the Interior." Enough said!

All Honest in Politics—to Politicians

Beyond any doubt, the people of Mexico are tired of so many revolutions. After each revolution, everybody thinks: "This is going to be the very last. We shall never have such trouble again." But since, within a few months, or a few years, another upset invariably appears, people have finally come to take revolution as a matter of course, much as an

invalid gets accustomed to his pain. They even reach the point where they can joke over their troubles, meeting each new political overturn with good humor and getting all the fun out of it they can.

All the funny stories about Mexico and the republic's present leaders were invented by Mexicans themselves, and not Mexicans living abroad for long periods of time, but those who have stayed at home and actually seen men and events close at hand.

I noticed one curious thing in Mexico. When one Mexican politician is talking about another of the opposite camp, he never calls his opponent's honesty into question. In the heat of political passion, he may doubt his enemy's personal qualifications and his reliability. He will call him a sneak and a liar. He will question the fidelity of the man's wife and the virtue of the man's mother. "He is a thoroughgoing scoundrel," he concludes, "but I must say that in money matters he is absolutely straight, and, in spite of what people say, he is really a poor man." And the man he is talking about says the same things about him.

There seems to be a tacit understanding

among them all to tell the truth about each other on every point except money. They are all anxious to make the point that there is not a single thief in Mexican political life. On the other hand, the lower class, the common people, which has been putting up with revolutions for years and years, and is always seeing its country go down hill instead of improving, smiles a smile of bitter skepticism when the words "unselfishness" and "patriotism" are mentioned.

Only the Masses Resentful

Two hundred thousand Mexicans get their living by making civil war and taking part in revolutions, fattening on the ruins of Governments that fall and on the inaugural feasts of Governments that come into being. Such people speak in all seriousness when they say that "Liberty must be preserved" or allege that "the Constitution is being violated." Poor Constitution is the most frequently ravished virgin in Mexico! But the rest of the population, which includes millions of people, either says nothing, with that significant silence of the Indian, or else it says: "Liberty! Constitu-

tion! Mere pretexts for a new grab. Just ways of making a living! All alike! All thieves!" And in this sweeping generalization it includes everybody in politics, pardoning no one, not even those who have come to a tragic death.

The Mexican people, which has a certain literary instinct and much imagination, invents all kinds of ingenious and interesting stories to wreak vengeance on the powers that be. Its biting satire respects not even death. The miserable populace has suffered so much and has so many accounts to settle!

Tragedy of Carranza's Brother

The story of what happened to Don Jesus Carranza, after his death, is a cruel but interesting and witty tale. This brother of Don Venustiano came to a tragic end. While Carranza was shut up in Vera Cruz by the troops of Zapata and Villa, he sent his brother on an expedition to the south of Mexico. The very escort which Don Venustiano had given Don Jesus for protection rose in mutiny and made him prisoner. Such jokes are nothing unusual in Mexican revolutions. No one knows with

certainty on whom he can count. You never know whether a friend on embracing you will not stab you in the back.

Don Jesus, with all his staff, fell into the hand of one of the petty chieftains hostile to Don Venustiano, and a dramatic episode occurred. The *guerrilla* telegraphed to the President, making on him a number of demands, of a political nature, which were equivalent to an abdication. He accompanied his demands with a threat to execute Carranza's brother if they were not granted. The proud and stubborn Don Venustiano made no answer; whereupon the *guerrilla* began to shoot, one by one, the members of the staff of Don Jesus. After a second failure of the President to answer, a son of Don Jesus, and nephew to Don Venustiano, was shot. A final telegram likewise failed to move the iron will of Carranza, and his brother was also executed, some hours before the Carranzista troops, sent to free him, arrived.

This blood-curdling episode aroused sympathy only among the partisans of the President. A few small villages took the name of Don Jesus, but they have probably lost it again

by this time. But while the friends of the Government were mourning the martyr, the people, that great anonymous novelist, was hammering out his story.

Tale the People Invented About It

It must be recalled that, at the beginning of the revolution, while Don Venustiano was making war on the partisans of Huerta in a number of States, Don Jesus had been in command of a division on the frontier of the United States. I was, of course, not a witness of his campaign, but people in Mexico say that this Carranza was a real Napoleon when it came to driving owners away from ranches and carrying off cattle.

No animal wearing horns would ever escape him. They all succumbed to his irresistible spirit on attack. In a very few of such campaigns he swept the territories under his control absolutely clean of cattle. Then he would drive his prisoners, which numbered thousands and thousands, up across the American frontier, and generously hand them over to buyers in the United States, in exchange for some little slips of paper issued by the banks.

At this point, the Mexican story begins. When Don Jesus died he went straight to hell. Where else could he go? . . . At that time there was war, not only in Mexico but in the greater part of Europe as well. You may readily imagine the great number of guests who were being admitted to hell. What a lot of incendiaries of cities! And murderers! And thieves!

Satan, who knows everything, got wind of Don Jesus's arrival and was anxious to make his acquaintance. As the devil has horns and a cloven foot, he was interested in getting a close-up view of this invincible persecutor of horned and hoofed animals.

"Where is Jesus Carranza?" he shouted from his throne.

Absolute silence. The man in question did not want to appear, he was so alarmed by the interest aroused. As the last consignment received in hell consisted of so many lost souls, he tried to keep out of sight, hiding behind his comrades.

Several small imps, obeying orders from their master, went through the groups, paging the missing person much as bellboys go through

the corridors of a hotel when they have to deliver a message.

"Mister Carranza! Mister Carranza!"

Another long silence. And Satan, annoyed at this lack of respect, called one of his cleverest little devils.

"Turn into a cow," he ordered him.

Immediately there was a moo, and a fine cow, fiery in color, began to run loose through the throngs.

But there was one there who could run faster than the cow. A man leaped over the crowd with the speed of a bullet, panting with greed, and grabbed the animal's tail. Then he seized the animal by the horns. "You cannot escape me, you cannot escape me! You are mine!"

That's how Satan discovered Don Jesus Carranza.

VI. CONDITION OF THE COUNTRY

WHEN we speak of Mexico and of the absurd things which occur there, many people imagine that that country is a half-savage nation whose normal condition is a state of violent revolution; a nation, in short, that has no conception of the duties of civilized peoples.

Those who hold this opinion of Mexico are wholly mistaken, though their error is not at all surprising. All nations, however advanced they may be, always misunderstand the real character of the neighbors across their frontiers. It would seem that nations feel in duty bound to misunderstand and slander one another. It is not strange, then, that Mexico should be misunderstood. The Mexicans, themselves, and I include among them the ruling classes, also lack a proper understanding of foreign countries.

It may be stated that Mexico is as civilized as any of the other countries of Spanish-speak-

ing America; but she has been extraordinarily unfortunate.

The history of Mexico during the last fifty years may be summarized as follows: those who tried to civilize her either did not know how or else did not care to complete their work; and their successors not only failed to complete the work of civilization, but, blinded by political fanaticism, they destroyed a great deal of what their predecessors had accomplished.

I have never been an admirer of Porfirio Diaz. He was simply a tyrant. The peace that he maintained for thirty years was secured by wholesale executions, ordered without due process of law, and by violations of the liberties of the individual. During his thirty years of rule he caused the death, by secret and underhanded ways, of more people, perhaps, than have fallen in all the battles of revolution. Moreover, although with his dictatorial powers he could have given a great impetus to public education in his illiterate country, he preferred to keep the people ignorant. Politically and spiritually, the long reign of Porfirio Diaz was a misfortune for Mexico; but we must admit, in all justice, that so far as material progress

goes, Mexico never had another ruler that could compare with this man.

What Diaz Did for Mexico

Every conspicuously modern thing that Mexico has to-day she owes to General Diaz. The great buildings in the cities, public sanitation, the railways, harbor improvements, school buildings for the better classes—all these date from the time of Don Porfirio. One is amazed to see the amount of building done or half-completed during the time of this tyrant. He kept the spirit of his people in fetters, but he succeeded in giving the country the outward appearance of a nation.

In one particular he succeeded admirably well. Mexico is a country that has inherited from the Indian a certain tendency to hate all foreigners, to shun them with an irresistible aversion or to harass them whenever possible. But Diaz realized that his country would be all the greater and more enlightened in proportion as it kept in contact with the rest of the world.

His glorious predecessor, Benito Juarez, for whom every man of democratic ideals must feel a deep interest and sympathy, had, neverthe-

less, a great defect. He was an Indian, and through an irresistible racial instinct he distrusted all foreigners and tried to avoid them. As he was patriotic, and, after the imperial adventure of Maximilian, had misgivings about the possible effects of foreign influence on his country, he tried to keep his nation in the geographical isolation in which it had lived. The coastline of Mexico continued to be a mere coastline without ports, and the north of the republic continued a desert to constitute an almost impassable barrier between the United States and the vital center of Mexican life.

Porfirio Diaz reversed the policy of Benito Juarez. He opened the ports and thus placed his nation in more frequent communication with Europe; he laid several railway lines which brought Mexico into contact with the United States. He took pains to develop the resources of the country favoring the creation of new industries, stimulating the development of the mines and aiding directly the discovery of the oil wells, an industry which grew in the last years of his rule.

During this period Mexico did not have liberty, but it had peace and prosperity.

The "Cientificos"

A group of intelligent men whom the public sarcastically nicknamed *los cientificos,* who eventually adopted this title themselves, placed themselves at the orders of the former warrior, now become dictator, and coöperated with him. There were Ministers who held portfolios for thirty years without interruption. The people naturally found this tutelage too long—so long, indeed, that the annals of absolute monarchy scarcely show a similar example. The revolution had to come. When it did come the people of the whole country, some because they wanted liberty and others because they desired a change after such a long period of inertia, followed the revolutionary path.

To-day, after ten years, observers begin to realize that the revolution has been of little use. There was no more liberty under Carranza than there had been under Don Porfirio, and, on the other hand, peace and prosperity had entirely disappeared.

The revolutionary Governments did not do anything new. What Mexico has to-day she already had under Diaz, except that now every-

thing is older, almost in ruins, like a building which gradually deteriorates for lack of some one to take care of it and repair the damage caused by time.

Moreover, the country has not gained anything in morality. When General Diaz was in power the people complained, as they do now, about the lack of honesty of their rulers, and they called the *cientificos* of those days thieves just as sincerely as later they accused the revolutionists.

Perhaps the people were right. I have not seen at close range the men who ruled the country under Diaz. But it seems that poor Mexico is cursed with an endless succession of money-mad politicians.

But if the *cientificos* were really thieves they differed from their successors in a particular well worthy of consideration. The former were constructive in their thieving, while the latter have been nothing but vandals. The *cientificos* did not squeeze their money from private individuals; they enriched themselves with the commissions received from public works which rendered good service to the country. Moreover, they got rich slowly. They took thirty years

to make their fortunes; as they were not in a hurry, they collected their graft with prudence and dignity, knowing full well that their Government was long-lived, and there was no need of any unseemly haste. But the latter-day thieves have been rapid-fire grafters, robbers of machine-gun rapidity, who knew they had only a few years in which to get rich, and so had to steal as fast as possible.

Mexico's Pitiable State To-day

Mexico to-day is in a pitiable plight. Of the former railways scarcely more than the tracks remain. The Government of Carranza took over the lines without compensating the owners. It operated them for several years, kept all the revenues and failed to renew any part of the rolling stock. The railway properties consist to-day of a few hundred old cars in very poor condition and some patched-up and asthmatic locomotives which serve sometimes to carry passengers who are not in a hurry, and other times to gratify the amazing genius the insurgents have for dynamiting trains. The sleeping cars are full of vermin, and their lighting apparatus is in such a state that it

frequently fails to work and the trains have to be lighted with candles.

Many of the stations are mere shacks standing near a heap of black ruins, the ruins being all that is left of a former station burnt a few years before by the revolutionists. Further on, one can see dozens of wrecked cars, mere skeletons, their iron frames blackened and twisted as if they were still suffering the torture of the explosion that destroyed them.

The ports are losing their traffic more and more every day. In cities which were prosperous once, like Vera Cruz, you can see the stevedores standing about in the sun, their arms folded across the breast, with nothing to do.

That fertile country, one of the richest in the world, can produce three annual crops, and yet it is barely raising enough food to feed its population. Instead of advancing, agriculture has declined. Cattlemen, tired of raising cattle to feed the revolutionists, have gone out of business. The farmers frequently find themselves left in the lurch by their peons who believe that to shoulder a musket and follow Villa, Carranza, or Obregon, as the case may be, is better than to hoe the ground.

The only export industries of the country are the mines, which are little worked; the sizal, produced in Yucatan, and the Tampico oil wells. As these are the only sources of wealth which yield an income, the Government taxes them heavily. The oil companies especially, the majority of which are owned by American citizens, had been paying Carranza, in one form of taxation or another, about 40 per cent. of the value of their daily output. A General who is one of Obregon's lieutenants admits in one of his writings that the taxes paid by the oil companies are formidable. However, if the oil companies failed to pay their taxes for three months the Government of Mexico could not survive financially, because the oil taxes are the only reliable source of income that it has.

A really painful contrast between what Mexico is and what it could become if the country had a half decent Government strikes the most casual observer.

Peasants Starving in a Rich Land

A common sight in Mexico is the peasant, with his large, umbrella-like straw hat and red poncho, squatting on the ground in an attitude

of profound thought, although perhaps in reality he is not thinking at all. Hours later you go by the same spot again and find the man sitting in the same position and still thinking. He has not moved. He has not done anything. Perhaps he has eaten a corn tortilla, which constitutes the principal article of his diet. And this poor wretch, who is suffering material hunger and moral anæmia, sits upon one of the richest thrones of the earth. The soil beneath him treasures gold, silver and petroleum, and it can produce 90 per cent. of all the different agricultural products known to man.

That peasant is disillusioned; he is a fatalist resigned to his destiny. He has been shedding his blood for ten years in battle after battle, always in the name of liberty. And he does not see liberty anywhere. The men who govern his native village and province have the same vices as those who ruled them in the days of General Diaz. They made this illiterate believe that everything that Mexico contained was going to be distributed among the people. He saw how the property of the rich was confiscated; but he is still waiting to see it distributed among the poor. Those who were rich

by heritage or tradition were succeeded by newly made men of wealth, by men whom he had known before as comrades in poverty.

All his! And the Mexican, thinking about these things, either remains passive the live-long day watching the trend of events, or else he joins those who have risen in the social scale, and hopes that civil war may last forever, that a revolution may break out every year, that no party may last too long in power, and that Governments may succeed one another frequently in order that all may eventually get a taste of the pleasures and profits of being "in."

Suppose the American Government in Washington should issue a new series of paper money some day, declaring it legal tender. Every one accepts it. Then the Government, should any one question the money, declares repeatedly that the debt represented by the paper is sacred and that it will be scrupulously paid at the first convenient moment. Then suppose the same Government suddenly decrees that the paper is worth nothing; that the State does not recognize the promise inscribed on the face of its notes, and that not a cent will be paid on any of them. The financial organism

of the country, of course, would collapse.

Such a thing would, indeed, seem impossible. It is hard to imagine it happening in any country on the face of the earth.

Well, it happened in Mexico—not once, but twice.

The Carranza Government on two different occasions issued paper money which it forced upon the Mexican public as legal tender and later repudiated, a robbery more irritating than any looting ever committed by party chieftains in the country, since it embraced the whole nation in the ruin it caused.

Recently, a few weeks before the revolution which overthrew it, the Government launched a new series of notes, but without daring to make it legal tender. Everybody, in the conviction that it would prove valueless eventually, refused to take it.

Carranza's jack of all financial trades was Luis Cabrera, a lawyer. I need not draw a portrait of Cabrera, for he has been in the United States frequently and is well known here. Cabrera has a good literary education and writes well. He was the pen and style of Don Venustiano, and when the President wanted to stab some enemy to the quick he

sent for his Minister of Finance. Many unfortunate decrees went out under Carranza's name and signature, but Cabrera, in reality, was their author.

Cabrera Councilor at the Elbow

For four years, Cabrera played the rôle of an astute councilor at Carranza's side, suggesting ways out of many a tight hole. I must pay homage to Cabrera's literary talent. He would have made an excellent professor of criticism. It was only the lack of logic in the revolution, the lack of enough good men to go around, that forced him to become a Minister of Finance. He often used his ability as a writer to bamboozle the public into believing that under Don Venustiano's rule, it was living in greater prosperity than ever before. He was always proving the existence of a *superavit,* an excess of income over outlay; but this was true only because the creditors to the Mexican debt (a matter of hundreds of millions) had received no interest for many years; because public service had been abandoned in many ways; because not a cent had been given to the school teachers (whom the Government threw back upon the towns, while the towns, with no means of rais-

ing the necessary funds, simply closed the schools).

Cabrera has a sense of humor, with a dash of cynicism in it. In his efforts to get a foreign loan, without which no Government in Mexico, whatever it is, can long survive, he must have laughed to himself many times as he reread the elegant fabrications that issued from his pen, to amuse the Mexican public and throw dust in the eyes of the United States bankers. As the reader will surmise, the people hated Cabrera, because he was the personification of taxes, more taxes, and heavier taxes; and then because of the gossip about his private affairs and the big deals he pulled off personally from the vantage ground of the ministry. Of this unpopularity he was himself aware, and he used to say ironically: "I have the honor of being the first and most distinguished thief in Mexico."

It is to his credit that he never batted an eyelash before the attacks made upon him. Lawyer Cabrera is a peace-loving man. He fought the war through under Carranza, but he was, like Bonillas, always with the rear guard as part of the administrative baggage. But

this did not prevent his having in his life a dose of that tragic fatalism all the Mexicans mixed up in the revolution have. Two of his brothers fell before a firing squad. Luis Cabrera himself would undoubtedly have been shot at this moment if the populace of Mexico City had found him lying loose somewhere at the time of Don Venustiano's flight. But like a rat deserting a sinking ship, he made good his escape several days in advance, leaving Carranza to his fate.

In times of peace, when he felt himself secure under the power that every Government has, his audacity and self-possession were something that inspired awe. When his enemies would accuse him of having amassed a huge fortune in the Ministry, he would answer in a published article, offering to hand over all his gains to anybody who could locate them. He was a poor man—as poor as a monk in the desert. At first this boldness succeeded with the public; but after a while it produced only laughter.

Carranza Sound at the Last

The most terrible thing in the history of Mexico, and the principal cause, in my judg-

ment, of its abnormal condition, is that the country has always been governed by Generals, or, rather, by "rough riders" from the country districts—men expert with the machete who are suddenly put in charge of bodies of soldiers. There have been some civilian Governments, but they have been few and far between, like islands lost in the sea. As every Government has been the product of a revolution, the man in control has always been a *guerrillero,* bolder than his comrades, or more clever in leading and exploiting them.

For that reason, Carranza's policy of having done with militarism once and for all, by putting in the Presidential chair a thorough-going civilian, was a sound one, and exactly what the country needed. The fallacy in it was his choice of an unsuitable and unpopular candidate imported from abroad, and the violent method he resorted to in carrying it out.

"Are there not people in Mexico," the reader may ask, "sufficiently distinguished to make up a purely civilian government, like those of other countries?" Undoubtedly there are, and perhaps there are more such promising civilians than in any other republic of the Latin-

Americas. Mexico differs from the other republics in its racial composition. In the most progressive Spanish-American nations, the white element predominates and is in control of public affairs. In Mexico, the native Indians are so numerous and the whites so few, that the latter, as a result of the revolutions, are, one may say, slaves of the former. In Mexico there are, roughly, a million and a half whites against some fourteen million copper colored people, Indians and half-breeds. The Indian of pure blood is a passive element in the population and figures as mere landscape in the country. The real source of trouble is the half-breed, who seems to have taken over the appetites and evil passions of both races, without inheriting any of the virtues of either.

Why an Intellectual Can't Be President

From the families of pure white stock come, as a rule, the people of studious bent, the "intellectuals," who contribute moral prestige to their country. It is safe to say that Mexico has given more eminent figures to Spanish literature than any other of the Spanish-American countries. The population in general has

great fondness for art, an instinctive taste for music, a passion for literature and a veritable reverence for science. But these polished classes—the whites, that is—have rarely seen one of their number in the Presidential chair.

The distinguished man of education in Mexico may be a famous professor, a great lawyer, a splendid physician. He may become a journalist and pass on to Congress, as deputy or Senator. He may even get as high as a Minister's Portfolio. His chance for the Presidency is very slight. To become President you must have been a good horseman, deft with the machete; and such experts are commonest among the copper colored elements. Some Indian blood, at least, is necessary to be eligible for the office of Chief Executive.

Had Clémenceau, Lloyd George, or any other political leader of the Old World been born in Mexico, the pinnacle of their ambition would have been the office of Minister of Education in a country without schools—the only high position reached by the many men of culture Mexico has produced in past years.

I believe it impossible, while the nation is as it is at present, for Mexico to have a govern-

ment made up of civilians. There is no lack of people of ability. They can be counted by the dozen; but they live shut up in their houses, avoiding direct contact with politics, or serving in positions under the triumphant wielders of the machete. You find them wandering about abroad, trying often to get a place back home, but feeling that their efforts will prove fruitless.

Force Needed to Protect Civilians

Let us suppose it were possible without revolution to work the miracle of constituting a government of distinguished peaceful civilians. I take it for granted that such a government would be elected by constitutional means, for if it came into power by revolution, the Generals, and not the civilians, would surely control it. Once it got into power, to sustain itself and do something useful, it would have to depend for its strength on a national army. The first job would be to suppress the old abuses, correcting the easy-going manner the officials, from the Minister down to the humblest tax collector, have in handling public money; prosecuting thieves and grafters, and eliminating

corruption from the administrative bureaus. This would create a host of discontented people; and we know what people do in Mexico when they are dissatisfied with the Government: they rise against it, and there are always people ready to join such an insurrection.

An army would be needed to protect our Government of illustrious civilians, and that army would have to be commanded by somebody, some General or other, a General Martinez, or a General Perez. That General would have to be somebody different from any General ever heard of in Mexico so far; otherwise he would surely act as logically as all the famous Generals Mexico has had since the time she won her independence.

"I am the man who keeps this Government going. It's only fair that I should put these pikers out of office and run things myself. Why should I let these fellows put anything over on me?"

And the government of honest men, of "fathers of their country," would be out of business within a year.

The Strength of Militarism

Militarism is stronger in the Mexico of the present than it was in the Germany of William II. It is a militarism in plain clothes and frock coats, Generals, Colonels and Captains, who go about like other people, insisting on your calling them citizens and who remind you that before the revolution of 1914 they were simple civilians. These men form a caste apart in the population. They have their idols, and these idols they are anxious to impose upon the country as a step to power.

Many people have hoped that the fall of Carranza might mark the beginning of a movement of regeneration. We shall soon be hearing high-sounding phrases from this Mexican militarism with so much of the literary and bombastic in the language it speaks. The victors will be talking of "democracy, which begins its career from this moment," of "the bright future opening before our country," of "the immediate realization of the promises of the revolution," and so on. Lies and poppycock, all such chatter!

The present revolution may be described as

the uprising of two Generals aspiring to the Presidency against an energetic and stubborn President bent on imposing his own civilian candidate by violent means. There is nothing else to it. If Carranza had desisted from his purpose of forcing Bonillas on the country there would have been no insurrection. Mexico can hope for nothing new out of it, nor can those who suffer from the perpetual disorder in the nation, which really deserves far kinder fortune, justifiably expect any immediate change for the better.

Carranza may have been an evil influence, but his conquerors are men of the same school, without perhaps his vigor and persistence of personality. It is useless to expect anything now from men like Obregon and Don Pablo Gonzalez. You might as well try to make a new suit of clothes out of cloth already rotting and moth-eaten. These two men are well-known quantities. They will surprise nobody. As for Don Pablo, some people laugh at him for his insignificance; others are suspicious of his enigmatic good nature. Obregon is an impulsive, erratic person, and the people who know him best are not, despite his general popularity,

convinced that he was born to lead a nation. That kind of man would be a delicious spectacle in the Presidency of a republic. The thought of him would surely cause a stampede of people elsewhere to go and live in Mexico.

De la Huerta—Will He Succeed?

The only "new man" the recent revolution has brought into notice is Adolfo de la Huerta, Governor of Sonora. I do not know de la Huerta personally, but friends of mine who are friends of his have talked to me about him. He is a cultivated and enthusiastic young man of high aspirations, who seems to have kept himself free from the blemish of politics of the Mexican style. His attitude toward Carranza was a noble and courageous one. He was the first man to rise in insurrection and take personal responsibility therefor, and at first it seemed that luck was going against him.

He has traveled and lived abroad, a valuable asset in a country where the rulers generally have never crossed the national frontiers. He was Consul for some time in New York. Before this revolution began his friends knew of him only that he was fond of art, especially of

music, and that he was devoting himself enthusiastically to the cultivation of his voice, a rather attractive tenor.

This young man reminds one of a virgin lost in a crowd of rabid and shrewd old hags who think they can become young again by rubbing against her. Who knows whether this man can resist the contamination of his environment?

"Then there is no way out for Mexico?" my reader may ask.

Yes, there is probably a way out, but I do not know what it is. I simply am sure that there is one. I am an optimist. In this world everything adjusts itself, sometimes well and sometimes badly, but eventually things turn out all right. Life is stronger than the barbarism and stupidity of men. Sometimes the remedy is pleasant to the taste, sometimes it is bitter as gall; but in the end things fall into that orderly rhythm without which life is impossible.

VII. THE GENERALS

I MUST begin this chapter with a story. In the second decade of the nineteenth century, when Ferdinand VII. of Spain destroyed the constitutional régime and restored the absolute monarchy, there was, so people say, a very wretched actor playing in a comedy theater in Madrid. He was not merely a bad actor. His ineptitude surpassed anything that the public of the Spanish capital had ever seen. When things were getting past the limit of endurance, a plot was hatched to drive him off the stage one evening with a fusillade of potatoes. But the actor, who in his way was no fool, managed to get wind of what was in store for him and made arrangements to avoid it.

"Long live the absolute monarchy!" he shouted, stepping forward on the stage. "Down with the Liberals!" And the audience in the theater fell into abashed silence. Who dared attack a man with such words on his lips? Any hostile demonstration would have been interpreted as an act of treason to the King.

Defenders of Present Mexican Rule

A device somewhat similar has been tried with me by a number of people who find it to their personal interest to support the present Government in Mexico. And it will, in the future, be tried by many, very many others, by everybody in fact who thinks it will help him along in his business to win the gratitude of the ruling clique in that country by rushing to its defense here.

"He is attacking Latin America," they shout, like the comedian of Madrid. "He is throwing mud at people who speak his own language and are of his own flesh and blood!"

Now, in my long career as a writer, I have done plenty of things that will protect me, with some to spare, from any such childish insults. In the last twenty years I have written a great deal in defense of the Spanish-American nations, and I have advertised in many countries all that Spanish civilization has done and is doing in the New World.

I have addressed not only audiences that speak Spanish. Why persuade people who are already convinced? I have spread my ideas in

countries of different languages. Many cities of the United States have heard lectures of mine on Spanish-American culture. I have spoken in its defense even in Mexico itself—not the pleasantest of tasks by any means; for there, apart from a small minority of exceptional people, the public as a whole, under the influence of a defective education, deifies the Indian, despite all his cannibalistic and heart-eating traditions, endows him with a whole set of historic virtues and reviles the Spaniard who first planted on the country's soil the standard of Christian civilization.

The "Gunmen Who Exploit Mexico"

It is usual for people who feel themselves in the wrong and don't know how to get out of their mess to confuse issues by distorting their antagonist's words. That trick will not work with me. I say exactly what I think, and it is useless to pretend I have said what I did not say and will never say. Latin America (within which the Mexican nation chances to be situated) is one thing. But the crowd of gunmen which is exploiting and dishonoring the poor people of Mexico is quite another.

I shall always defend the independence and dignity of the nations that partake of my native blood, but the mere fact that a gang of *guerrillas,* with a grip on the throat of Mexico, happens to use my language to express its collective egotism and ambition is not sufficient to win my support. In my works I fought German militarism tooth and nail because I considered it a curse on the world. Must I compromise, then, with Mexican militarism just because, as compared with the German, that militarism is something grotesque and absurd?

For the very reason that I am a Spaniard, and love Latin America, I feel in honor bound to combat that pop-gun terrorism which is discrediting everybody of Spanish race. If the Mexico of Obregon, of Villa, of the rest of them, were located at the other end of the American continent, in Tierra del Fuego, let us say, we could let it fume in peace. The fact is, however, that Mexico borders on the United States, the most powerful nation in the world at the present moment. Mexico, in its revolutionary greed, has involved England, France, and all the countries which make up world opinion. And the disgrace falls back upon every one of

us who, by ties of Spanish blood, feel associated with that unhappy people.

In a subsequent article on "Mexico and Latin America," I shall say something about the damage which the abnormal state of affairs in Mexico, by reason of the Spanish language of that country, does to the prestige of Spaniards in general and particularly of the Spanish-speaking States of the Americas. Humanity, as a whole, does not know geography. It generalizes dangerously in its judgments of nations and races. Most people, when they think of poor Mexico, with one stupid revolution succeeded by a more stupid one, take no trouble to distinguish that country from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, or Uruguay. "The usual Latin American stuff! What can you expect?"

Truth Improper for Export

There is only one way to remove such false impressions, and that is to tell the truth. Yes, the truth! But Truth is the last lady on earth that some people care to be introduced to. A few days ago I met a Mexican who furnished me with some of the data I used in my articles. I was not writing a novel. All those stories, all

that gossip, all that talk about graft and robbery, I got either in Mexico or from Mexicans. "It's a shame!" he said to me. "Those articles of yours are a disaster for Mexico!" "Wait a minute!" I said. "For Mexico, or for the people who are bossing and robbing Mexico? If the latter, I tell you frankly, I'm tickled to death. I wanted to get those fellows! However, that's not the point. Was I, or was I not, telling the truth?"

I could see by the expression on his face that he was going to say it was not all true. But he remembered then that a number of the items had come from no one but himself. "It was the truth," he answered with conviction. "But there are truths and truths. The truth we can tell to our friends. But do you have to go shouting it from the housetops?" And he added, after a moment's reflection, as though something brilliant had occurred to him: "You might have kept those articles for Spain. We don't mind what people think over there. But publish them in the United States . . . Of all places . . . !"

The reader will get the point. The truth about actual conditions in Mexico is not considered

down there as proper goods for export to the United States. As for the opposite of the truth —export all you want, and no questions asked! But any one who describes things as they are is an enemy of Mexico!

A Militarism Based on Disorder

Perhaps I should not stress the comparison between German militarism and the militarism of Mexican brand. German militarism seems to have gone forever; but that of Mexico is in the flush of youth, and it has a long and busy life ahead of it.

German militarism was based on tradition, on hierarchy, on order, and besides, it originated in the victories of 1871 and in the conquests of territory those victories resulted in. Mexican militarism is based on disorder, on the sudden attack boldly conceived, on the insurrection considered as a means of advancement. In its whole history, Mexican militarism shows only a series of civil wars, resulting in execution for private citizens, plundering for towns, destruction for the National Railways. We have yet to see what it could show, in the way of in-

telligence and professional skill, if it had to deal with an attack from abroad.

The German Generals set up an Emperor who was Emperor once for all, and passed the office on to his sons. The Mexican Generals set up a republican Emperor, from time to time, in accord with their own desires and ambitions. Yesterday it was Carranza, "Our First Chief," "Our Beloved Leader"—but for the moment, and all rights reserved to kick him out and "suicide" him, if necessary! To-day it is Obregon, hail-fellow-well-met, the chief with a smile and a slap on the back for everybody! And to-morrow, somebody else, any one at all, provided he promises to give what his predecessor failed to give, because there are not enough easy berths in the Mexican Government to accommodate all who would like to fill one.

Everybody's Generals

In former times there were, in Mexico, only such Generals as belonged to the regular army, soldiers by profession, like the professional soldiers of every other country. Now there are Generals and Generals! There are Generals appointed by Carranza. There are Gener-

als created by Villa. There are Generals manufactured by Felix Diaz. There are Generals counterfeited by Zapata. Who is not a General down there? During my visit in Mexico City, whenever I was introduced to a simple Colonel, I rubbed my eyes for a second look, and almost with pity for the poor fellow. "What's wrong with this man?" I thought. "He's not even a Brigadier."

Another point of difference between militarism in Europe and that of Mexico! In the old world, the General carries a sword and swears by it. The Mexican General in the make-up supplied by the revolution, does not know what a sword is. He never wore one. He carries a revolver in his belt, and I can imagine him swearing a theatrical oath: "By my six-shooter!"

Whether Generals or Colonels, they are all boys, scarcely of voting age, boys scandalously immature and still infected, for the most part, with the bellicose aggressiveness and perversity of the youngster in the preparatory school. Most of them held small jobs under the Government of Porfirio Diaz; or else they were ordinary laborers, or even idlers, ne'er-do-wells,

who enlisted under the revolutionary banner and managed to win the little gold eagle which is the symbol of their present grade.

The Thrill of Catchwords

The highest original social rank that I found represented among the Generals was that of university student. Scattered among the few officers of urban origin there are Generals who were formerly *rancheros,* or cowboys from the cattle ranches. These illiterate rustics listen to their city-bred comrades with wide open mouths, and kindle at every mention of the words "liberty," "democracy," "redistribution of property," and so on—phrases they do not understand at all, but which send thrills of sacred consecration up and down their backs whenever they hear them.

All these Generals boast of their humble origin, and go out of their way to refer to it as a title to distinction. Some of them are "Socialist Generals," while others claim even to be Bolshevists. However, their "comrades" of the rank and file must be careful not to carry the principles of brotherly love into matters of discipline. The "Citizen General" is quite

capable of ordering a hundred executions or so just to "keep order." The Generals, as a rule, hate uniforms. Many of them never owned one. They pin the gold eagle to a coat lapel or to their enormous felt hat, and they are ready for dress parade.

Their Wonderful Revolvers

The General's outfit has one other distinctive mark—the revolver. I remember that, as a boy, I used to notice how Generals in Spain, France and other European countries, when they were in citizen clothes, wore red sashes under their waistcoats. This was an indication of rank; and when they wished to be recognized they simply lifted the flaps of their vests. The Mexican General also has a sash, but a sash of tanned leather, a "Sam Brown" affair, stuffed with fifty cartridges or more, and a revolver usually worn in back. When, as you walk down a Mexican street, you meet a gentleman with the lower part of his vest unbuttoned, just enough to show the belt and the cartridges, you cannot be mistaken. He is a General, or at least a Colonel, "of the revolution." He is taking his pistol out for a constitutional.

And what guns they wear! If you have never seen the revolvers of the Mexican War Lords, your education is still incomplete. The wildest dreams of the most delirious German fire-eater who ever lived are surpassed by realities in Mexico. There are machine-gun pistols. There are pistols with folding stocks that can be instantaneously transformed into rifles. There are large-bore pistols made for firing explosive bullets. I left the country without getting to see the famous "papa and mamma" pistols. But I was assured by people whom I trust that there are pistols in Mexico which when they are discharged say "papa" and "mamma," like the mechanical dolls of the toy shops. Some of them even play a piece of music.

The Dueling Type

At times you meet a short, hollow-chested, neurotic-looking fellow—fine points, these in a regular soldier. You wonder whether that is a man or what in the world it is. There is no doubt in this case either. This time it is a pistol taking a General out to walk. Then again you are sitting in a train and suddenly you start with surprise. A General has just

vanished through a little door marked "Gentlemen," but before hurrying away he has taken off his belt and parked his artillery on the seat beside you.

The arguments that spring up at all hours of day and night between these armed men are a source of danger not only to themselves but to the public. At best one General kills another at high noon in some candy store on the principal street of the city, and nobody arrests him. Then again two Generals will open fire in the middle of a public park, and the cannonade does not stop until all their ammunition has been exhausted. A matter of thirty or forty minutes, perhaps, and no casualties—unless perhaps some passerby, not knowing that two Generals are scowling at each other in that particular place, runs into a bullet before he can get away.

But Everybody Totes a Gun

To be fair to the Generals, I must add that they are not the only people in Mexico who carry guns. Revolvers are as indispensable as neckties to a gentleman's wardrobe. Mexico City since the revolution began has lived the

life of a dime novel. The "movie" men do not have to rack their brains for subjects. They read the papers; murders, assassinations, highway robberies, kidnapings, bands of masked men! The capital, no less, was the home of the famous "Band of the Gray Car." The Mexican public has always supposed that gang to have been in the employ of Generals. People are even more specific. They allege that its leader was one of the present candidates for the Presidency of the republic.

The only difference between General and civilian, in the matter of revolvers, is that the Generals wear their guns in full view while ordinary people keep them half concealed. The revolver is used for all sorts of purposes. Whenever I was at a picnic in the country and a bottle had to be opened, some friend was sure suddenly to produce a pistol. "It's so much simpler, you see." And civilian or soldier, as he might chance to be, he would hammer away at the metal top of the bottle until it came off. And the weapon was loaded all the time.

Explosive Under Trappings

Mexico is a blessed country! There is something affable, vehement even, about its courtesy. When a friend shakes hands with you he throws one arm over your shoulder. And I adopted the manner myself. But when I got my arm over the shoulder of an acquaintance I used, out of curiosity, to let my hand fall gradually downward toward his belt. It never got quite that far. In the neighborhood of the man's waist I would always encounter a sort of metallic framework. It was the revolver and its sheath, along with a whole magazine of cartridges. The Mexican revolver is intended for the long-drawn-out battle. It required a lavish supply of munitions.

For the life of me I could never find out whether the Dean of the university also carried a gun. The sly fox always avoided my embrace and his studious precautions against any such contingency left me convinced that my suspicions of him were well founded. "Oh, my dear So-and-so, so glad to see you!" And I went around embracing them all one after the other and they all had the inevitable revolver.

When I say all, I mean all—Ministers, Under Secretaries, Journalists, Deputies and Senators, and these latter with good reason, because debates in Congress often end with an exchange of a bullet or two outside the chambers.

Carranza Wore One, Too

Even Carranza, as President of the republic, used to carry, under his severe ceremonial frock coat, a horse-pistol with an extra large supply of munitions. Poor Don Venustiano! He knew his times and his people only too well! He felt himself surrounded by experts in *dar la vuelta,* by people only too ready to bite the hand that was feeding them. He was sure that, sooner or later, he would have to defend his own life. What, probably, he never foresaw was that the men trusted to guard him would rouse him one night with cries of "Viva Obregon!", empty their guns into him point blank, and then assert that he had died a suicide! Carranza a suicide! Carranza, the most stubborn man in the world, the "mule in the President's parlor," as his enemies used to say! For any one who knew Carranza, that suicide story is

the most brazen, the most impudent, calumny that could ever have been cooked up.

This gang of country louts and roisterers, who call themselves Generals and are running the country for what there is in it, are for the moment worshipers of Obregon. Obregon is one of them. I might call him, even, the Mexican General par excellence; and his followers adore him because in him they see their own image triumphant. They all pretend to be insulted if you accuse them of militarism. Militarists? Not they! They are "revolutionaries!" They are, and they are going to remain, simple "citizens"!

The Revolutionary Caste

Nevertheless, they form a caste apart from the rest of the nation. They support and protect one another; and now again to get one of their number in power, they have gone back to the barracks, or to the mountains, to incite existing troops to mutiny, or to raise new forces, and produce a revolution that is Revolution No. 64 in the course of a single century!

Despite all his defects Carranza, during the last months of his life, had a sound conception

of what his country needed. He wanted to create a government of civilians; he wanted to hand the Presidency over to a man who had never been in the army. He was determined to have done with Generals and militarism once and for all. As the leader of a long revolutionary war he knew better than any one else what Mexican militarism means for that country. But he chose a bad candidate and was overconfident of his own strength. He forgot that treason is a fundamental in Mexican national politics, and the reward for his noble endeavor has been defeat and assassination!

At this moment militarism is in higher ascendancy in Mexico than ever before. The civilian Provisional President, Adolfo de la Huerta, well meaning and estimable youth that he is, represents only an interlude in Mexican affairs. Should he try to impose his own ideas upon the course of events he would fall over night. Militarism is in command in Mexico, and militarism means Obregon.

Obregon's Chances

"How about the rest of the country?" some one may ask.

The rest of the country for years past has not figured in political intrigue, and it has no desire to figure there. The floor is held now by those who have succeeded in the recent insurrection, by militarists or by civilians standing with the militarists in the hope of getting some berth which only a civilian can fill.

It will be useless for Obregon to talk of "free speech." If he were a newcomer in Mexican life, a few fools might believe him. But Obregon is only too well known. Nobody has forgotten the victims he once ordered his subordinates to shoot, nor the storekeepers he set to sweeping the streets, nor the respectable prisoners he herded in cattle cars. Obregon is a Proconsul of the Roman decadence, when authorities used to write jokes and puns around their signatures to death warrants. Nobody in Mexico is going to do any talking. The closed mouth is the symbol of prudence there.

"But will Obregon hold the support of the militarists?"

No!

It is the part of logic to say "No." Carranza had far greater prestige than Obregon will ever have. He was "Leader" and "First

Chief" in reality! He could not find enough plums to go around! And he was murdered!

The moment Obregon is unable to make good on all the promises he has made, and to satisfy all the ambitions he has aroused, the moment his offices are all filled and many of his present friends are left out, the disappointed people will unite with other disappointed people, the cry of "Death to Obregon! Viva Tom or Dick or Harry!" will be raised—and Mexico will have one revolution more. As I shall show in another article on "The Mexican Army," the elements for such a new revolution will not be lacking.

"But what is your idea, then," several friends of mine have asked, "in attacking Mexican militarism with such harsh revelations?"

The answer is easy. I want to contribute all I can toward the destruction of that militarism, which is the principal cause of the backwardness and anarchical state of affairs in which Mexico is living. So long as that country does not suppress its Generals, who are everlastingly bent on tyrannizing over it, so long as it is not ruled by pacific citizens able to think in modern terms, Mexico will remain a sad ex-

ception, an object of loathing and disgust, among all civilized peoples. The well-to-do classes of Mexico have fled the country and are wanderers on the face of the earth. The middle and professional classes have continued living at home, but under deplorable conditions, and either not daring to speak at all, or saying what they really think in as low a voice as possible. What else can they do, if militarism is in the saddle? Where can they find protection, if the strongest portion of the people, kept in ignorance, formerly by the priests and now by Generals calling themselves liberators, follow the military men blindly on receipt of a rifle and on a promise of $2 a day, and a free hand?

I have with me a number of letters from Mexicans, written to me before I went to Mexico and after I got there. They read like the lamentations of slaves, denouncing the crimes of their oppressors and doubting whether there will ever be justice in that country. Many of the letters contain insults addressed to me, and I shall keep them because of those insults, because of their delightful injustice. When I was noticed at the capital in the company of men

in the Government my correspondents thought I had "sold out to the oppressors of the real Mexico." They imagined I was going to raise a pæan of eulogy in honor of Carranza and the militarism which was doing so much wrong to the nation and was finally to turn against its chief. They were looking for an avenger to denounce their oppressors, and they foresaw in me one more defender of tyranny.

I imagine that by this time they have realized their mistake. I had to frequent the circles of those in power to see things in their true light. Now I have seen what I wanted to see, and I go on with my work.

Wanted, an Aroused Public Opinion

"And what is that work?" you ask.

Simply to tell the truth to the damage of triumphant militarism! And if I should succeed in the task it would be a great day for Mexico! A writer, to be sure, is a small man for such a big job. But just as I have spoken here in the United States I shall go on speaking in Europe and everywhere else. And who knows? German militarism was a far stronger and a far less ridiculous thing. But no slight

influence on its ultimate destruction came from the uprising of public opinion against it throughout the world. I shall work to create such a public opinion, to isolate the militarism in Mexico, to deprive it of all mistaken support abroad. Then we shall see whether it grows stronger or weaker; whether finally it does not die without a friend in the world; whether the peace-loving and intelligent classes of people in Mexico must go on living in oppression and humiliation as slaves to the first *machetero* that comes along; whether they are not able to govern themselves as people do in other modern countries!

And in this idea I shall go on with my work unless the Mexican militarists take it into their heads to "suicide" me, as they did Carranza.

VIII. THE MEXICAN ARMY

MEXICO once had a regular army that was well organized and quite comparable to the military establishments of other countries. This army was demoralized, first, by the revolution of Madero. During the long civil struggle led by Carranza it fell to pieces completely. The so-called Federal Army was then abolished as a dangerous institution created by Porfirio Diaz. Even the officers' training schools, the military academies, were closed. Anybody who had ever held a commission as a Federal officer was regarded with suspicion by the triumphant revolutionaries.

The "army" now rampant in Mexico is made up of the old revolutionary bands, gradually whipped into the outward appearance of regiments and led by former *guerrilleros* newly baptized as Colonels. When such regiments are stationed in Mexico City or one of the large towns they are equipped, after a fashion, with uniforms, though the privates never quite suc-

ceed in all looking alike. On holidays the officers make a more dazzling display of scarfs and gold lace than any other soldiers on earth, and this bellicose splendor is often in grotesque contrast with the oily skins and unkempt beards that it adorns.

But in the outlying districts the soldier is an ordinary peasant, with that enormous Mexican sombrero which everybody knows, two well-filled cartridge belts stretching bandoleer-fashion from shoulders to waist and crossing at the breast, and, finally, a rifle. Bayonets are not used in the Mexican Army. The city battalions sometimes carry them to piece out their "uniform," but the soldiers do not know what they are for. They are, in fact, of little significance in Mexican warfare, a matter of long-winded fusillades at limit range, the outcome of which each General can interpret to his particular taste, reporting grand strategic conceptions or happy tactical maneuvers à la Napoleon, as he sees fit. The General with the most cartridges and the greatest endurance in firing them is the one who gets away with the victory.

Obregon against Villa was a Joffre or a Foch

so long as he had his back to the port of Vera Cruz. Cartridges came in there every day from the United States, for the American Government was backing Carranza, ungrateful and unappreciative though the First Chief proved to be. Villa, on the other hand, without any support across the border, received no fireworks at all. Eventually he had to decamp, "routed" by the great one-armed strategist of Celaya.

An Army of Both Sexes

The Mexican Army is composed of men and women.

No one has ever decided conclusively which of the sexes makes the better soldiers.

The Mexican takes his wife everywhere. He is a sentimental chap, readily susceptible to feminine charms and quite likely to be unfaithful to the woman he has sworn to love and cherish. But he cherishes her all the same. His spouse goes with him into sorrow and joy. She shares his comfort and his hardship.

When you are traveling on a Mexican railroad you can give odds that more or less concealed somewhere on the train are the wives of

the engineer, the fireman, the brakeman and the conductor. If you feel inclined to prove it, just start a row with one of the trainmen. You will at once have a hysterical woman on your hands, shrieking at the top of her voice and defending her "man" literally with tooth and nail. If an accident ever happens to one of the crew the most heartrending scenes result inevitably. A Mexican refuses to go anywhere without his "old woman." This epithet is a term of endearment. The "old woman" may be twenty years old.

It is the same with the army.

To count the women you count the soldiers. Every one of them has a wife, following the regiment everywhere. Most often, also, he has a number of children along.

In peace times in the capital you may see a detachment with shouldered rifles on the way to relieve guard or on an expedition into the country. Just imagine! Alongside the column and keeping step with the men marches a line of copper-colored women, wrapped in black shawls. They are lean and wan, as though the turmoil of that life, without rest or quiet, kept all the flesh stripped from their bones. Each

woman carries a basket on one arm. Trotting along at her side are a number of barefoot youngsters. Some of the little fellows are naked. They keep smiling at their daddies, but with a respectful eye out for the officer, a sort of much-feared god, who is always shooing them away when they run up to take their father by the hand.

The "Soldierettes"

Around the barracks at certain hours of the day the doorways and sidewalks are crowded with women, sitting elbow to elbow there in correct military alignment. With their black shawls over light-colored dresses they remind you of so many penguins lined up on the edge of some cliff on the glacial oceans. Each of these women—they are dubbed "soldierettes" by people of wit—has a basket at her feet. She has brought her "man's" dinner.

Right there in the middle of the street, or it may be in a railroad station or out in the open fields, the soldier sits down on the ground with his wife and children round him. And he eats his meal with majestic deliberation and slowness. The women are usually dirty, and often

they are in rags and tatters. The miserable life they lead does not lend itself to personal refinements. But the delicacy, the neatness and even the primitive taste with which they prepare these meals is something astonishing. The basket contains, besides food, a large napkin or tablecloth, so to speak. It has a colored border, with wide fringes, so that the woman can stretch it tight on the ground. The plates and deep dishes are in earthenware, with painted frets, suggesting the pottery of the Aztecs.

After the soldier has eaten he gets up, tightens his belt and takes his gun. The little ones wipe their mouths and noses with their knuckles and devotedly kiss their daddy's hand. He pats them on the head in benediction. "God keep you!" is his stock phrase of farewell in revolutionary times, "and here's hoping they don't kill your papa!" The youngsters do not understand, but the lean, copper-colored woman standing there in her black shawl lowers her head in fatalistic resignation. Death! It is so easy to die in a country of revolutions! That was what her other "man" said as he went away never to come

back. That was the way also with the "man" before that one.

Faithful Unto Death—Only

For the "soldierette" or "hard-tack," as she is also called (the actual word is *galleta*), is faithful beyond reproach to her "man"; but she goes to another without the slightest hesitation the moment her "husband" is killed or throws her over. What good is a "soldierette" without a soldier? Neither passion nor beauty figure in these unions. The quality the Mexican soldier most values in his "old woman" is her skill in finding something to eat and in spreading the meal on the ground, her ability to "stand up" under hard work. When a soldier falls he wills his woman to some more fortunate comrade in arms. Since the Mexican Army takes men of all ages, fifteen-year-old boys may be seen living with "hard-tacks" old enough to be their mothers or their grandmothers. And there are wrinkled old men, with white stubble on their chins, who get their meals from girls in their teens, whom they have inherited from soldiers killed in some previous skirmish.

It is during actual fighting in the field that the "soldierette" gives proof of all her powers of endurance and self-sacrifice. Many Mexican Generals have thought of abolishing her, but in the end they have had to compromise with her and finally to seek her support. What else can be done in an army destitute of a supply and sanitary corps? The sick and the wounded cannot be abandoned to chance. The "soldierette" makes up for more than one deficiency in the Mexican military system.

Not only does she look after the soldier. Sometimes her attention is needed by the chief.

"Have you a bite to spare?" the Captain asks one of his men during a halt on march. The officer, not provided as a rule with "hardtack," is much worse off than the private. "No, Captain, but the Indian will be back soon and she'll be sure to have something." The "Indian" is another pet name used by the soldiers when they get tired of the "old woman."

Foragers of Sorts

When the troops are on the march the "soldierettes" form the advance guard. They keep several miles ahead, so that when the men

arrive the fires will be burning and the meal ready. The towns and villages are more afraid of the women than of the soldiers themselves, though the latter have only the vaguest notions of property rights and the value of human life. The "soldierette" will march for whole days with a brat clinging to either hand, another invisible one awaiting its call into the world, a pack of clothes and bedding on her head, and often, to top off the outfit, a parrot.

With so much impedimenta you would think that woman had trouble enough. In point of fact, she passes over the country like a scourge of God. Along her path not a tree remains with a piece of fruit, not a garden with a turnip, not a coop with a chicken, not a barnyard with a pig. She sweeps everything before her, and the landscape behind has the parched, barren aspect of the desert. It is as though a plague of locusts had settled on the land. That woman can pick up a good meal in sterile places where any ordinary human being would starve. A village may have been sacked seven times in one week. Give her the chance for an eighth time over and she will turn you out a regular Sunday dinner.

Sometimes as they march long distances ahead of their husbands the "soldierettes" of one regiment will meet the "hard-tacks" of another troop which is advancing to give battle. If both bodies of women are not specially hungry, if some previous pillage has satisfied all immediate needs, the passions of patriotism and politics find occasion to express themselves in noble animosity. The women and children throw sticks, stones and epithets at each other till the males come up and start the real show.

More often, however, both crowds of "soldierettes" are short on provisions of one kind or another. Then they get together on friendly terms. "People have got to live. Why should civilians have to scratch each other's eyes out?" And the ones who have food share it with those who have only money. But Mexican money is often worthless. They much prefer to sell supplies for cartridges. The "men" of the "soldierettes" are running low on ammunition. The Government troops, on the contrary, have just received a fresh and lavish supply. The Federal "soldierette" will walk back several miles looking for her "man."

"They won't take money," she reports. "They say you get nothing to eat unless you can pay in cartridges." Her "man" expresses no particular interest in the matter. He has been in the same fix himself. "Well, here you are, then!" And he passes over a handful of .44s, one of which may kill him two hours later in the day. The one thing certain is the dinner. Death, at the worst, is only a possibility!

The Mexican's indifference to death is not courage really. Courage is that positive compulsion the man in commodious circumstances feels when, voluntarily and fearlessly, he goes out to meet self-sacrifice and danger. The Mexican has, rather, a mere contempt for life. It is fatalism, absence of fear, more exactly. Death, no matter in how terrible a form, will not prove much worse than life as he is living it! That is the feeling.

Songs of the Army

Mexico is peopled by music lovers and its inhabitants turn to poetry and song by instinct. The most respected men in any regiment are the ones who can play a guitar well and sing a song for the bedtime hour. The musician's

comrades look after him and vie with one another in doing him favors. They keep him away from the firing line, and their first thought as a battle begins is to see that the guitar is in a safe place. "What would happen if we lost our music?"

Another curiosity! With the exception of an air sung by Villa's men called "The Cockroach" (La Cucaracha), all the songs of the revolution are named after women. There are "La Adelita" and "La Valentina," for instance. The "Valentina" is the "Marseillaise" of the present-day Mexico. When you hear that song around a Mexican camp, look out! A revolution is about to break out. And yet its lines are not so bloodthirsty after all. It is the lament of a wandering drunkard addressing himself to a girl named Valentina! The last stanza, however, is alone sufficient to justify the immense popularity of the song:

Valentina, Valentina,
Rendido estoy a tus pies.
Si me han de matar mañana,
Que me maten de una vez.

"Valentina, Valentina, dead-drunk I lie at your feet. If they are going to kill me to-morrow, they might as well kill me now."

The whole psychology of the Mexican people, its fatalistic resignation, its contempt for death, its acceptance of the misery in which it is living, its inability to buck up and rise, is worked into those last two lines. That is why the song is loved so much. It expresses a national philosophy. "If I have to die to-morrow, I might as well die now."

Revolutionaries by Necessity

There is no fear that any Mexican revolution will prove a fizzle for lack of men. It might fail for lack of arms, for lack of cash, for lack of understanding between its leaders. But men it will always find in abundance.

The moment it is whispered around that a revolution may break out peons begin to get scarce around the plantations. Any number of them prefer to risk hunger and thirst in the desert, provided there is the chance of getting into a town once in a while with a rifle and a free hand!

Then there is the great mass of indifferent,

resigned people who fear not even death. Here we find a great majority of the Mexican population, which never start a revolution, but are simply forced into it. "I was living on my farm and bothering nobody," says an old fighter. "First they took my cow; then they took my horse. Finally I said to them: 'Well, if you are going to take everything, give me a rifle and I will go with you.' And my old woman felt the same way about it. After all, what else was there to do?" And so the civil war got one more soldier and one more "soldierette."

The ignorance, the mental apathy, the irresponsibility of these men, is something astounding. They fight each other and they kill each other without the slightest idea of why they are doing it. Meanwhile the newspapers in the pay of the Generals write pompously of the "enthusiastic troops of the revolution" and "the sacred principles for which they are offering their lives."

There was a moment during the second period of the great revolution when Villa was fighting on one side, Carranza on another and the government emanating from the Pact of

Aguas-Calientes on still a third. Some of the troops got mixed up as to whom they were fighting for, and they were not sure which *viva* to shout as they began their battle. The point was this: If they cried "*viva* the wrong person"—and the political situation kept changing from hour to hour—they might get a volley from the troops beside or behind them.

"Say, who the devil are we for?" one soldier asked of the man next to him as they fired their first shots.

"How should I know?" was the answer. "Better ask the Captain."

"And I wasn't sure myself," said that officer to me, as he told me the story in Mexico a few weeks ago.

Recruiting, Mexican Style

When a man fails to join an insurrection out of fondness for firearms or out of fatalistic indifference, there are indirect ways of persuading him to become a soldier.

I know a Mexican General who enjoys a great reputation among his admirers for his skill in raising troops. "He takes to the mountains," they told me, "with one attendant and a few

rifles. He turns up at the end of the month with 500 men. Give him two months and he will have 5,000, and so on till he gets his army."

One evening when I was dining with the General in question he confided some of his trade secrets as an organizer to me. I remember one of his feats in particular. He had come to a mining district to raise some troops. It was a busy place, with everybody working, and wages were good. Nobody wanted to be a soldier. So, on the pretext that the operators were "enemies of the common people," the General had the entrances to the mines blown up. He enlisted 300 men the following day and a thousand before the end of the week. He told the story, moreover, with a show of real pride.

At times these improvised soldiers exhibit a heart-winning ingenuousness. One of them during a battle was crouching with one knee on the ground and firing away into the air with the conscientious regularity of an honest factory hand kicking a footpress. He started with a hundred cartridges. Every now and then he would look at his bandoleers. "That's forty!" "Now that's fifty-five!" When they were all gone he got up and started for the rear. Meet-

ing his Captain, he said: "Here, boss, here's your gun!" The Captain looked at him, but did not understand. "My job's done. I burned the whole hundred of them. Give the next batch to somebody else. Equality, you understand, boss! That's what revolution means." And he was off to look up the "old woman."

Such a concept of war is, of course, a ridiculous one, and it is only fair to add that the Mexican soldier kills and dies with absolute indifference. The "soldierettes," poor beasts of burden that they are, or incubators for soldiers and "soldierettes" of future revolutions, also develop heroic courage under certain circumstances. They care as best they can for the wounded falling on the field, and when their "man" is killed they take up his gun and carry on the fusillade. They have been known to work strategems in battle worthy of the heroines of antiquity.

Once in an action, where the regiment of men was advancing along a road, I was told that the "soldierettes" and all their children marched along a parallel road. As the women proceeded they began to brush the sun-parched trail with branches they had cut from the trees.

A great cloud of dust arose, and the opposing General was completely deceived. "They have cavalry, . . . probably artillery!" And he ordered a retreat.

"Generalettes" for Generals

The Generals of the revolution feel that same hankering for home life which makes the private insist on his "hard-tack." The "Generalette" is as necessary to while away the dull hours of bivouac as the "soldierette," and she rides with her husband on his campaigns.

That is the way with Mexicans. I hope that in my novel, "The Eagle and the Snake," I shall have room to analyze more thoroughly the many contradictions in Mexican psychology. A Mexican can be at one and the same time both sentimental and cruel. He will burst into tears at a sad story, and he will order out a firing squad for an execution; he is passionately devoted to home and family, but he is never satisfied unless he is tramping over mountains and deserts in support of an insurrection. Tradition also figures large in the minds of country people, especially, in Mexico.

Villa is a perfect specimen of this latter type.

Villa does not smoke. Villa does not drink. His only weakness is women, and the presence of a woman is enough to upset him completely. At the sight of one his massive lower jaw, buttressing that well-known Villa face, has been known to drop, while a trace of foam began to appear at his lips. One might suppose such a man capable of carrying off a lady by main force. Worse things than that figure in Villa's biography. But, as a matter of fact, Villa is a man of principle.

"Things have to be done proper like," says he, "the way God and Holy Mother Church commands."

And when he finds a woman to his liking he marries her with all the established rites and the greatest possible solemnity.

Once he promoted an Indian curate, a relative of his, to be Bishop to celebrate in suitable dignity, miter and all, his marriage to a Mexican stenographer. The employee in charge of the Government marriage register brought his book to the ceremony, and Villa, who can write nothing but his name, affixed his signature to the matrimonial record. Then he went off with his bride to the Pullman car in which he used to

live all the time, much as the old-fashioned bandit chiefs used to live in their dog tents. The next day, when Villa woke up in the morning, the first thing he thought of was to send for the marriage license man and his book. That poor devil obeyed the summons, trembling like a leaf, and sure that his time had come.

"You have that book, eh? . . . Well, . . . show me the page!"

The record in question was pointed out to him and the text explained. At last he was convinced, because he recognized his own signature. And he calmly tore out the leaf, folded it up and put it in his purse.

At last his conscience was clear!

He was a man of morals, with respect for established institutions. He was faithful to his first wife, his real wife, and he intended to remain so. He was not going to leave any documents around that some day might cause a scandal.

IX. MEXICO'S OMINOUS SILENCE

THE Mexican capital is a city of gloom. In daytime, under a dazzling sun and a sky of deep blue, it has movement and animation. Besides, pretty women, with great deep eyes and golden complexions, are going about the streets. But when the night shuts down Mexico City resumes its mood of somber melancholy.

This quality of sadness and loneliness is only intensified by the brilliant lighting of the streets. Some ancient towns seem to shake off their habitual gloom when, after sunset, they are shrouded in romantic semi-darkness. But Mexico is one of the best lighted cities in the world. New York may surpass it in its Great White Way with its electrical advertisements, but the majority of New York streets are pitch dark as compared with those of the Mexican capital.

Electricity costs very little there. It comes from a waterfall of enormous horse power that

lights all the cities of the Mexican plateau and drives the machinery in the factories and mines. That is why the street lighting of Mexico City is the best in the world. Every twenty-five feet there is an iron column with five large globes. The streets blaze like a conflagration. The lamps seem to meet a few yards ahead of you, shutting you in between two narrowing walls of fire.

The Night Lonesomeness

And underneath all this splendor, as intense as the brightness of noontime—solitude, nothing, emptiness, made more acutely noticeable by the occasional appearance of some passer-by. In this city of brightness the after-dinner problem of any one unable to go to a theater is something maddening. "What can I do? Where can I go?"

I used to go for a walk every night along the principal avenue of the city, wincing under the blinding glare. Before long I came to know by sight all my habitual companions on this promenade, much as you come to know by sight the people who eat regularly in your restaurant or stop at your hotel.

One of them was a dog.

It was the same dog every night, and after several meetings I felt like wishing him good evening.

There was also a man escorting his wife—the same man and the same wife each time—and at the end, though I had never spoken to them, I felt that I had known them all my life. They did not miss an evening. And other habitués went by along this great avenue, so royally illuminated, but as deserted as a village road—families returning from some party, some *tertulia,* loitering pairs of lovers, or hurrying taxicabs.

Every so often a small motionless group of people—the entrance to some theater or movie show! Beyond them silence again and solitude! Again that electric lighted vacuum in which your footsteps echoed as in a tomb.

I found Mexico a very silent city.

Past Gaiety of the Diaz Regime

People who have lived there all their lives assured me that in former times it was not like that. They said that under Diaz this city, which a famous traveler of the era of Spanish

rule referred to as the "City of Palaces," had a night life as elegant and amusing as any great metropolis in the world.

I am inclined to believe them. In those days there was peace and prosperity, though liberty may not have been so great. People could go out on the streets at night without running very serious risks. But now, after ten years of perpetual upheaval, bad business, and personal insecurity for any one not connected with the revolutionary profession, how can the capital avoid an appearance of sadness and discouragement?

Besides, the old wealthy families which supported the amusements of other days have now been reduced to poverty or else they have gone abroad into exile far from Mexico. The newly rich are not anxious to display their wealth. They affect very modest ways of living, to avoid any questions as to how they may have made so much money in such a very short time.

The worst of it is that the present situation offers no outlook toward better things. People had gotten used to life under Carranza, the way you get used to a disease. He was bad enough, but a new revolution would make things worse! Many optimists believed there would be no

more violent overturns of Governments. But the present revolution came all the same. And we may be sure it will not be the last. It is an insurrection led by a number of different men for a single Presidency. In it are the seeds of several other revolutions, which will follow at greater or lesser intervals of time.

I can imagine all that the faithful inhabitants of Mexico, who never deserted their country, have seen and suffered in these last years. And so I can understand why it is they stick to their houses at night and never go out except for some very urgent reason.

Germanism in Mexico

I do not attach so much importance to those early days of the great revolution's triumph, when the houses of the rich were pillaged and libraries and works of art were destroyed. Many revolutions, in the flush of first success, have been marred by episodes like these. The poor native, neglected by everybody, conservatives and liberals alike, had never been sent to school, save to the school of violence. He thought he was within his rights in tearing books to pieces and burning or selling them.

A carbine meant more than a volume in his eyes. The native looks around him in Mexico, and his peasant's insight into things tells him that it is not by reading books that people get to power and rule over other men. He sees that the successful man is the man on a bronco, with a lasso coiled around the horn of his saddle, a rifle slung over his shoulder and a machete dangling from his fist.

The discouraging thing is that the pardonable initial violence of the revolution was followed by the systematic, calculated violence of so-called peace, one act following another like the scenes on a theater program—cold-blooded outrages like those German militarism planned in Europe to overawe its foes with terror. The peaceful, harmless persons who remained in Mexico lived through all that. It was to escape all that that so many families fled to New York, Los Angeles, Paris, London or Madrid.

Every triumphant General moved into the house that he liked best; and the domestic instincts of the Mexican *guerrillero,* which blend with his harsh and cruel disposition, were turned loose without any restraint. "This automobile for the 'old woman.' " "This parlor

set is just what *mi India* has been looking for." That was the case with the German soldiers in the French cities. They plundered, but with the preferences of their wives and daughters in mind.

Public and Private Robbery

When people have been on a visit to some conqueror's mansion in Mexico City they often go away nudging each other: "Did you notice? That furniture in the dining-room used to belong to So-and-So." There are women who quite openly wear famous gems given them by their husbands, but which once belonged to other women. The more prudent ones proceed somewhat differently. A popular actress in Mexico, whose mission it was in recent years to receive love letters from the Generals, along with jewels from the booty of revolution, has a goldsmith working for her who does nothing but transform lockets into rings and rings into breastpins. In the new form it will be harder for the original owners of the gems to identify them.

In addition, there was robbery under private management, with all the mystery and intrigue

familiar in the detective story and the movie drama. Especially notorious and terrifying was the "Band of the Gray Car."

A well-to-do family, venturing to leave home for an evening call, on returning would find the house open, all the trunks and safes forced, every drawer turned topsy-turvy, and the servants bound and gagged. On a table would be a note: "Do not report to the police. Silence is golden. Truly yours, The Band of the Gray Car." That would be the end of the matter. People would talk, of course, but in secret, with their friends. This Band dealt particularly with the homes of wealthy exiles, where such operations could be conducted with virtual impunity. Any passer-by, seeing the formidable vehicle parked in front of a house, would do his best to get as far away as possible, and as soon as possible.

There was good reason for fearing the terrible car. Its joy riders, though ordinary bandits themselves, proved to be all-powerful. The active leader of the Band, according to common report, was a young General, with a suspicious record and notorious morals, who kept a number of actresses supplied with jewelry. Accord-

ing to the same gossip, the "man-higher-up" in the whole business—and at this point one seems to enter fairy land—was no less than one of the candidates for the Presidency, at the time chief of police.

Gray Car an Unsolved Mystery

I repeat that the story is hard to swallow, and I refuse to believe it. But for many people the former police chief remains "the man of the Gray Car." During the recent election campaign, his political enemies put a film on the screens on every circuit in the republic. It was a detective story dealing with the Gray Car outrages. The purpose of the film was divined by everybody. It aimed to keep the memory of certain doings fresh in the public mind.

The real truth is that the mystery has never been solved. When this General had given up his public office, Carranza started out to satisfy the public demand for a clean-up. He succeeded in catching the Gray Car and all its occupants red-handed. But the men corraled were mere tools, nothing more, common burglars hired to do a certain job. "They are bound to squeal," people thought, in the expectation of sensational revelations. "They will denounce the

men higher up to save their own skins." But the thieves died, one by one, in prison before the cases came to trial. Some were murdered outright. Others "died suddenly." But not one of them talked.

Danger to life was, for some years, much more serious for residents in Mexico, than danger to property.

Worse Looters Than Villa

The Zapatistas are the most slandered of all the numerous political groups in that much divided country. In reality Zapata's followers were the only sincere revolutionaries. They formed a sect rather than a party, and Zapata was a prophet whom they obeyed. "Land for everybody!" That was his slogan. His men were barbarians, something like the Huns. They would fall upon Mexico City much as the barbarian invaders used to sweep down upon Rome. But they were honest men. No one in my hearing ever accused Zapata or any of his followers of getting rich off their raids. They smashed everything they could lay their hands on, but they never carried any of the pieces away in their pockets.

Among these unselfish vandals of the revolution we must reckon Villa, too. People who called themselves important many a time had to go and pay homage to this chieftain, or justify their manner of living before him in the famous Pullman car, which was his regular domicile, and which is, to the history of contemporary Mexico, what Attila's tent was to the dawn of the Middle Ages.

But what I was going to say is this. The presence of the Zapatistas and the Villistas, so long denounced as bandits, even by the very men who used them early in the revolution, was much less feared by the honest, hard-working citizens of Mexico, than the approach of Government troops.

"And now for the Carranzistas," they would say, as the bands of Zapata or Villa retired, and they would begin to weaken at the knees.

And who were the Carranzistas? They were Don Pablo Gonzalez and Alvaro Obregon!

"Old Man" Carranza was way behind, coming from Vera Cruz, with all his cabinet furniture.

Don Pablo's Murder Jokes

Gonzalez and Obregon represented triumphant "Carranzismo."

Genial, lovable chaps, these two old cronies, who, now that Carranza has been put out of the way, ask the world to accept them as two men of the future, two political virginities!

Don Pablo, so deferential toward persons and so meticulous about legality, would summon a group of officers.

"Gentlemen, you are a court-martial. Put So-and-So on trial and have him shot. He is a nuisance."

The court would come to order. The defendant would bring proof of complete innocence. His counsel would thrash around and tear their hair, and the court itself would end by asking for the culprit's release.

That would not disconcert Don Pablo. He would draw his pen through the verdict and say to an Adjutant: "Go and get that So-and-So." Mr. So-and-So would be at home, surrounded by family and friends and receiving congratulations on his acquittal. Then the new summons would come. "More red-tape to un-

wind, I suppose," the unlucky man would say. "Perhaps I forgot to sign some paper."

A half hour later he would be in front of the firing squad.

Ill-humor was the characteristic of all Don Pablo's practical jokes.

How Obregon Behaved

Obregon, for his part, had a lighter touch. His jests were more expansive, more theatrical. He is something like the Kaiser, in this respect, and doubtless in recognition of spiritual kinship with the man, William II., as Obregon claims, wanted to read the book the Mexican Napoleon had written. The parallel can be pushed further. Obregon has an amputated arm; the Kaiser has a withered hand. They are both "cracked," as the phrase goes, both fond of sensational speeches, dramatic attitudes, and ostentatious military reviews.

On his entry into the capital, Villa's conqueror took advantage of a public meeting to insult the whole population at one stroke. "You Mexico-Cityites are so many females. Why don't you dress in petticoats? This woman here is more of a man than the best of you. Here,

Citizeness, accept my pistol." And he presented a revolver to a "citizeness" on the stage, who was bearing a Sam Brown and had been much in evidence among Carranza's soldiers.

The business men in Mexico City won this tribute from the General's eloquence, because, like the business men of Guadalajara, Puebla, and other important centers, they had refused to join the revolution.

The so-called hero of Celaya liked to slap shopkeepers in the face, or set them to sweeping the streets. When his humor was most expansive, he would dwell on the Spanish ancestry of the merchant class, and address some vulgar epithet to Spain. Mexican nationalism usually expresses itself in obscene insults to other nations.

For the rest, he too ordered executions and executions, but as I said, always with a touch of good humor.

Genial Stories of His Aide

One of Obregon's most delightful "parlor stunts" or after-dinner amenities is to narrate the life and miracles of General Benjamin Hill.

". . . and then—Hill, you know how Hill

is—Hill puts his gun between that grocer's eyes, and says 'Charge, Fido,' and the poor fish kneels down to be shot. But Ben doesn't even have to pull the trigger. The fellow has croaked from sheer fright . . . sheer fright!"

" . . . and then Hill—Hill was always like that—he lines 'em up against the wall, and bang! Oh, Hill is a terror, when he gets going. . . ."

" . . . and then, Hill, he bundled that bunch of priests into a train of cattle cars and sent them off to Vera Cruz, telling the engineer not to break the speed laws. That's a time they went to bed without their suppers! The trip took several days. But Hill always was an atheist, you know."

" . . . and then Hill, he says to those *gachupins ('gachupin,'* like 'gringo,' for the American, is what a Mexican creole is called), he says to those *gachupins,* either you come across with the cash, or you get the firing squad. And the *gachupins* came across . . . came across!"

As Obregon tells these tales of General Hill's prowess, he underlines the fine points with a smile that he would make a smile of disap-

proval. In your astonishment, as you listen, you ask yourself, "But who can this Hill be? Some superior of Obregon, whose orders Obregon can criticize but not countermand?"

Not at all! Hill is simply Obregon's Chief of Staff, his ranking Lieutenant, who does nothing without permission.

It is a case of cruelty masked by a jovial or, as I said, a good-humored hypocrisy.

Real Types of Mexico's Rulers

The silence of Mexico is not confined to the external aspects of the town. You feel it in individuals as well.

The more intelligent, the better educated a man is, the greater his intellectual distinction, the more taciturn and reserved he appears.

People venture to talk only behind closed doors and with friends whom they trust implicitly. They have lived through such terrible experiences! They have such good reason to be afraid!

Some of my critics who find it to their interest to misinterpret me, since they cannot dispute the accuracy of my story, assert that I am

describing a vaudeville Mexico, with nothing but burlesque characters and villains.

They are right. I am painting just those types, but I add, that those types are the men who govern, or pretend to be governing, the country. Behind them, keeping modestly and carefully out of sight—for to show themselves would mean sacrifice or exile—are the real people of Mexico, the people I respect and would like to see in power.

The Good Men in Exile

Mexico has any number of honest, cultivated, distinguished citizens who have never been generals but have thrown credit on their names in the arts of peace. Where are they? Some of them have stayed, out of patriotic devotion, in Mexico—but attracting no attention to themselves, and hoping that politics will never discover them. Others have fled the deadly environment. They are in Cuba, in Europe, in the United States.

Against these men I shall never speak. In them lies the hope of Mexico, the only hope of salvation and restoration that remains. Their time will come when Mexico, exhausted from its

frenzied dance of militarist anarchy, falls breathless to the ground. What connection is there between such people—writers, historians, physicians, lawyers, celebrated men born in Mexico, who laid the foundations of the nation's prosperity—and the tortuous Don Pablo, the megalomaniac Obregon, the cattle thief Villa, and their gangs of pistol-bearing generals? Why should criticism of the excesses of such criminals, or ridicule of their absurd presumptuousness, imply that Mexico has no people fit to manage an honest, unselfish and progressive civil government?

The reason why I respect the Mexican exiles and have confidence in them, despite the fact that I know few of them personally and intimately, is precisely because they have been living in other countries and have acquired the broader outlook on national and international affairs that Mexico lacks seriously.

Hostile to Foreigners

They say that under Porfirio Diaz, Mexico had some respect for other countries of the world, that Mexico welcomed the foreigner and understood he represented progress. That is

not the case to-day. I have never seen a country more hostile to foreign things and ideas, more inclined to savagery in international relations.

To understand why, you have only to know its rulers personally. Hardly one of them ever crossed the frontiers of Mexico. Carranza was a man of unquestionable native talent. Yet he talked like a simpleton when he discussed the United States or Europe; and when I disillusioned him on some of his misconceptions, he opened his eyes in astonishment, as though he were listening to a tale of magic and magicians. Some of his Ministers could expatiate on the defects of the United States from first hand knowledge. They had spent a week-end once in San Antonio, Texas.

Luis Cabrera was the expert of the crew. He was the most traveled of them all. He "knew" the United States, Argentina and Chile, and he had toured Europe. His "knowledge" consisted in repetitions of charges against American or European political figures which he had read in some opposition newspaper, and often an unimportant sheet at that. The true greatness of America, for instance, what the Ameri-

can people has done or is doing, was a closed book to him. In his eyes other nations were poor copies of Mexico.

Where Ignorance Is Satisfaction

The victors of the moment are no better off. A few of the young men have been to the theater on Broadway and they can talk about pink legs they have seen in the musical revues. I believe Don Pablo Gonzalez once ventured as far as Paris, but I am not sure. Obregon, certainly, has never been in Europe and only once in the United States. That was in connection with his corner of the *garbanzo* or chick-pea market during the revolution proper. The murdered President, Don Venustiano, gave him the exclusive right to export chick-peas and Obregon cleaned up a tidy sum of money on the deal.

The revolutionary underlings know still less about other countries. How can they be expected to esteem the foreigner? In Mexico I heard Deputies and Senators say complacently: "We don't need any outsiders here. They come only to fleece us."

Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, all devote large appropriations to advertisement abroad.

They are anxious to attract immigration and capital. They understand that it is the foreigner and not the native who is exploited. The immigrant leaves his capital, his labor, and most often his life, in the adopted country. He becomes attached to the land as an element of order and productivity, and he raises children to inherit what he leaves.

Mexico, quite to the contrary, hires savages to go to Congress and say: "Keep the foreigner out." And it serves her right. The only civilization in Mexico was put there by the foreigners whom Porfirio Diaz brought in. All that survives will survive through their efforts. The trouble is that foreigners are becoming fewer and fewer, and there will soon be none at all unless peace and security are restored.

Hatred for Profit

There have been revolutions in the past in other Spanish-American countries, and they occur occasionally there still. But in them it is a question of native thrashing native. They leave the outsider alone. Not so in Mexico. The rural populace has been taught by so-called revolutionaries to hate everything foreign, and the

first thing the natives do when they mutiny is to attack the merchant class: "Death to the Spaniards! Down with the *gachupins!*" Their antipathy is not all a matter of historical tradition. Spaniards constitute the majority among business men. If the natives cannot find a Spaniard, an American, a Frenchman or an Italian will serve their purpose just as well. The important thing is that he have a plate-glass window in his store and a strong-box with money in it. When they have cut the merchant's throat and cleaned out the money drawer they go back to the mountains to defend the sacred principles of revolution.

I have been in Mexico and heard with my own ears the admissions and complaints of my Spanish countrymen. "I have made and been robbed of three fortunes. Now I'm going to try once more. Just when I'm getting on my feet a revolution comes along and takes in a week all I have made in five years." They stick to the game as the ruined gambler sticks to the card table. Besides, they were brought up in the country and have formed attachments there. They have broken all outside connections. "You see, I'm not so young as I was. It's too late to

start over again somewhere else. Where could I go?"

No Exception to Spain

When the European nations present their claims on Mexico the Spanish Government, which has an affection for that country, as it has for all the American republics of Spanish language, will send in a bill also, less in the hope of collecting it than with the idea of emphasizing the extent of Spain's forbearance. Robbery will be the least important item. The world will then know how many hundreds of Spanish citizens have been put to death by the regenerators of the Mexican people, Obregonistas as well as followers of Villa.

"But they were interfering in politics. They were supporting Porfirio Diaz."

Such countercharges will be made by the very men who shot these Spaniards. It will be a case of a defendant acting as his own judge and his own witness.

The fact will not prevent those executioners of Spaniards from finding some hack writer in Spain to defend them at so many dollars a volume and write their panegyric.

I confess that my own ideas on Mexico have changed somewhat since I went there and saw things at first hand.

Some people may think it strange that a man known as a revolutionist in his own country should treat many revolutionaries in Mexico so harshly.

Well, yes! If all the revolutions in the world were like Mexico's I would be a reactionary.

Real vs. Fake Revolutions

My revolutionary disposition makes it impossible for me to compromise with a fake revolution.

I have passed many years of my life trying vainly to overthrow the Spanish monarchy and set up a republic in Spain. I have been in jail I don't know how many times for plain speaking in my newspaper publications or for complicity in attempts at armed insurrection.

I was court-martialed and sent to jail for a year and a half (and I served my sentence) for opposing the war between Spain and the United States and upholding Cuba's right to her independence.

During my political career I lived in extreme

poverty. I could not write. I could not work at any profession. All my time was taken up with the revolutionary cause. I never held office. My only public position was that of Deputy to Parliament, to which I was returned seven times, in a country where Congressmen receive not a cent for their work in the Chambers.

I fought a losing fight. But how can I compromise with the false Mexican revolution, where every leader has gotten rich, or, if not, has simply not succeeded in getting rich and is cooking up a new insurrection so that his turn may come?

I am not afraid of revolutions in principle, provided after destroying they know how to rebuild. But I have no use for the Mexican revolution, which breaks everything to pieces, carries off all the débris it can gather into its arms, and then does nothing whatever to replace what has been lost.

Burlesque and Boredom

The Russian revolution may seem to many people to be the work of lunatics; but the lunatics are honest in their madness; they are

dreamers, willing to live on bread and water for their ideals. There may have been robbery in Russia, as there is in every revolution, but robbery by the scum of society, the worthless element that exists everywhere. Lenin and his intimate circle of friends have not been laying up money during these last years.

Is there a Bolshevik in Mexico who can say as much?

As an anti-militarist and true revolutionary I cannot sympathize with Mexican militarism. I am consistent with myself. I fought German militarism, which had a tradition glorious in its own eyes and a scientific outlook as well, because I thought it a menace to the world. I cannot make peace, therefore, with Mexican militarism, though that militarism is an affair of clowns and savages, menaces no other nation by its power, and simply discredits Mexico and everybody who chances to speak the language used by its absurd heroes, who are burlesques part of the time and bores for the rest.

As a Spaniard I hate the men who have aroused the sleeping barbarism of the poor native to hatred against the foreigners. Those men have caused the murder of many innocent

Spaniards. They are the ones responsible for the death of many Americans employed in the mines and oil districts in Mexico.

As a lover of Spanish-speaking America, of the so-called, though badly so-called, Latin America, I feel deep hostility, not toward Mexico as a people and a people that is having misfortunes enough and to spare, but toward the fictitious Mexico of the false revolutionaries who have brought the country to its present pass—the only Mexico, unfortunately, which outsiders are able to see from a distance.

The Evil in the Show Window

Mexico's proximity to the United States makes her the show window of Latin America. Mexico is the first thing people see as they turn their eyes southward. It is useless to talk of the marvelous progress of the South American countries. All that a hundred and ten million Americans can see is the Mexico of the present, a show window of horrors, with blood-stained samples changed from day to day.

And, thanks to the sad advertisement the Mexican revolution, accomplishing absolutely nothing that is useful or good, has been giving

us for the last ten years, we Spaniards and citizens of Spanish America have been more and more discredited each day.

The Americans of the United States put us all in the same boat. We are all sharers in one disgrace.

On this point, and on the relations of Mexico and the United States, I shall have something to say in my next article.

X. MEXICO AND THE UNITED STATES

THE politicians of the Mexican revolution know nothing about the United States. They have never, as a rule, been outside their own country. They also know nothing about Europe. But the ignorance they show on all matters touching the republics of Latin America (so called) is beyond conception.

Carranza was always dreaming of a scheme of his to build up a league of Latin-American nations; its purpose was to counterbalance the power of the United States. He thought such a league would give him strength and enable him to put on a bold face in Washington.

Don Venustiano, on at least two occasions, outlined his plan to me. I should hardly call it a plan, perhaps, for it never reached the blueprint stage. In reality, Carranza was not on friendly terms with a single man of importance in South America.

Needless to say, Mexico was to play the leading rôle in the future league, and Don Venustiano was to be director general.

The sense of personal importance is a characteristic of present-day politicians in Mexico. It is matched only by their absolute ignorance of everything that goes on beyond the Mexican frontiers.

In a way their logic could not be sounder. Mexico has fifteen million people. No Spanish-speaking nation in the Americas has so many. Then, Mexico is the oldest of the Latin-American countries, and—age before beauty.

Explaining South America

I remember the flush of anger that came over their faces one day when I failed to suppress an exclamation of surprise at one of their questions. "Which city is the larger and prettier, Buenos Aires or Mexico? Can Argentina be compared in any way at all with the Mexican Republic?"

"Excuse me, gentlemen," I said, "have you gone crazy? Buenos Aires is the leading American city after the large centers in the United States. Buenos Aires is the second Latin city in the world. It comes next to Paris. It is larger than Rome. It is larger than Madrid. The Argentine Republic is the second largest

grain-producing nation in the world. The United States alone exceeds her figures for cereals; as for meat, Argentina leads everybody."

"But Argentina has only seven million people," they answered proudly; "there are fifteen million Mexicans."

"That would let you out, if it were a question of counting noses and ignoring quality. Those seven million people in Argentina produce ten times as much as you and they spend twice as much money abroad. That is why their commerce prospers. They export to the whole world. They are rich.

"And don't forget another thing. The population there is all white. They are not revolting all the time. They invite foreigners in to share their wealth, because they know that the greater the immigration the faster their country will progress."

And the Advantages of Peace

I went on, then, to talk about Chile, with a population still smaller than that of Argentina. But Chile is utilizing all her resources above and under ground. Splendid mines, splendid

agriculture. And she has built up national industry. "Chile," I continued, "leaves an unforgettable impression upon every foreigner who visits the country. She welcomes him with open arms. In the course of a whole century, Chile has had but one real revolution."

Then we passed on to Uruguay. "Uruguay," I said, "was once a very troublous State. But now things have settled down there, and the nation has been enjoying a prosperous era of peace. Uruguay has developed her natural wealth to such a point that her money tops world exchange.

"But don't forget one thing," I said. "All those nations are nations of whites. As for Brazil, her prosperity in recent years is phenomenal."

"Wait a minute!" they interrupted. "Brazil has many negroes. The majority of the population is black."

"It doesn't matter which race is in the majority," I replied. "The only relevant question is the race and civilization of those in control. Brazil has always been governed by a minority of very intelligent people, up-to-date on international affairs. Without interruption for

twenty-five or thirty years, Brazil kept Baron Rio Branco—a sort of Porfirio Diaz of diplomacy—in charge of her foreign relations, with the result that Brazilian diplomacy has been the cleverest in the New World. She has got all she wants out of the United States and will continue to get what she wants."

"But there are Spanish-American republics in as much confusion as Mexico," they objected, "and just as fond of revolutions."

"Yes, my dear friends," I said, "but the noise a firecracker makes depends on the place where you set it off. It doesn't sound so loud out in the street as it does in the parlor, for instance. You can do things out in the backwoods that would get you into jail if you tried them on Fifth Avenue in New York. When a revolution breaks out in some country in the interior of South America, only the people there need worry. Revolutionaries down that way, besides, are careful not to murder any foreigners. Their capers get half a dozen lines in the big world newspapers, and the day after everybody has forgotten them.

Plain Words About Mexico

"But Mexico, luckily or unluckily, is the most conspicuous place on the American Continent. It also has the best acoustics. Mexico is the head of our Spanish-speaking world. It is highest north, in immediate contact with the United States. You are the show window in front of which a hundred and ten million Americans walk by every day. And what do they see? Nothing but horrible and disgusting exhibits! If the display itself were not bad enough, you would have other claims on world attention. Your revolutions last for years and years, and you break all records for the number of foreigners you kill.

"You never ask anybody when you feel inclined to start one of your revolutionary merry-go-rounds. You don't want to be told by anybody. Very well! It's your business and you can run it to suit yourselves, I suppose. But then you have no right to expect us Spaniards to palliate your crimes, or attempt to justify them out of family pride, because we all happen to speak the same language.

"Mexico has been a disgrace to everything

Latin American and Spanish for ten years past. Humanity at large is under no obligation to specialize in political geography. As a matter of fact, no one knows the whole world well, not even the best educated people. A few of us try to learn what we can, a very few of us. The vast majority of people are alike everywhere, in the United States, England, France and all other places. And the moment they hear a word of our language, they say, in a superior manner: 'Oh, yes, Spaniards! South Americans! Mexico! Villa!'

"That settles the matter for them. That is all they know or care to know. A shrug of the shoulders finishes the argument. Why should they talk with or about an inferior section of humanity?

"They are ignorant people, I know. I have met people in the United States who imagine that Mexico is in South America and they are surprised to learn it is as much a part of North America as their own country. But American ignorance is no excuse for the conduct of revolutionary Mexico, nor does it free us from the reproach that Mexico brings upon us all.

The Show Window of Latin America

"Having said that Mexico is a show window, I am going on with the figure. Latin America is the shop and the United States is the street. Only those Americans who have done business inside know that on the shelves there are high-class, up-to-date goods. A few American buyers know that there are peaceful, progressive countries in Latin America—Argentina, Chile, Brazil and Uruguay. They know also that other countries still have revolutions because they have not yet reached their full growth, and because, like Mexico, they have ignorant masses of natives, governed, however, by intelligent and distinguished whites. There is Peru, for instance, or other Northern Republics too numerous to mention.

"But the immense American majority that simply goes by on the street, the immense majority that makes up public opinion in the United States, has no idea of what is to be found inside the shop. It sees only what is in the show window. And what is that? Decapitated heads, to begin with, for Mexico still decapitates people and puts the severed heads on

exhibition; then machetes dripping with blood; then a string of murdered foreigners; then a President, perhaps, shot by his bodyguard; then a friend clasping hands with a friend and driving a knife into his back; finally an educated man serving as councilor to a bandit, promoted General!

"It's time that show window were washed up a bit. Mexico, the real Mexico, has a much better line of goods to advertise than that. All you have to do is change the management inside. You need to put some one in charge who knows more about books and less about machine pistols. And until the change is made, we must go on attacking and protesting, in the good name of the America of Spanish language.

Not Fifteen Millions That Count

"You say there are fifteen millions of you," I continued. "You may be that big, some day, when you get a school system in Mexico and pay your school teachers. For the present, there are two millions of you whites only, a scant two millions, at that, and you don't know where they all are. There are five or six million pure Indians. I don't consider the Indian

such a bad fellow after all. But what have you done with him? You have robbed him and maltreated him worse in one century of independence than the Spanish administrative routineers did in thrice that space of time. Your liberal laws deprived him of his lands. Your revolutions have shot Indians down in great masses by making them fight for things they knew nothing about. Not one of your political parties has made the Indian go to school. The Indian may amount to something when your nation gets prosperous. Now he is nothing but the eternal victim of your political lies.

"Then we come to the majority of the Mexican population, the detritus, the erosion, arising from the meeting and amalgamation of two races. You have from seven to eight million *mestizos,* half-breeds, whitewashed Indians or bronzed white men. There may be a few decent individuals among them, as there are in any mass of people. But the majority of them are loafers, fond of noise and big talk, soap-box artists with a gift for the theatrical pose, idlers and bums, who never did a stroke of hard work in their lives and hate any kind of success that is not attained over night. They are the raw

material of your revolutionaries. They take to politics like ducks to water, but to a politics of persons and not of ideas.

"There are not fifteen millions of you. There are two millions at the outside. Make it five, if that suits you better. You might be able to scrape together three millions of serviceable *mestizos,* who are good, at least, for something, though not for much. In the future, when you get to be governed by men—men in the best sense of the word—and not by Generals, when Mexico gets to be a truly civilized nation capable of living in peace with itself, then you may really become the second nation of the Americas. You will have not only fifteen million people, but many more; for your potential wealth is enormous, and foreigners will flock here the moment danger is past. As it is, poor Mexico must remain a third-rate nation among the other Spanish-American republics, and that thanks to the counterfeit revolutionaries."

Incapable of Broad Vision

Whenever the Mexican notables started to talk about the South America they were anxious

to attach to their interests, they went completely off the track.

Cabrera, Don Venustiano's Minister of Finance, was the only one at all acquainted with those countries. He had been in Chile and Argentina for some months during the European war, trying to organize a "Congress of Neutral Nations," which, in reality, was to support Germany.

What did he learn on that visit?

I must advise my readers that I lived six years down there myself, and I think I know those places a little bit better than Cabrera.

He saw all the bad points about Buenos Aires and Santiago, but he had no eyes at all when it came to anything really great. There was a look of pity on his face as he talked about Argentina and Chile. What were they compared with the grandeur of revolutionary Mexico? As I listened to his chatter, I had to admire the man's power of imagination, his ability to squeeze reality into his own narrow vision and to find only things that flattered his vanity.

Don Venustiano, crafty and redoubtable as he was in political intrigue, proved to be the easi-

est of easy marks when it came to some purely intellectual question.

He had to find a name for the league of Spanish-American nations he had in mind.

Well, he might have called it the Hispanic-American Federation, or the Ibero-American Alliance, or the Latin-American League. But that all seemed so insipid and hackneyed to him, so blasé.

The "Indio-American Federation"

I suppose he must have turned to the Madame de Staël of the revolution, the ex-stenographer or telegraph-girl, who had invented the "Carranza Doctrine." In any event, somebody or other produced this masterpiece: "The Indio-American Federation."

Dear old Don Venustiano! He must have been thinking of the South American statesmen as so many showily dressed mulattoes or half-breed Indians, with faces as swarthy as those of the Ministers and Generals he had gathered around himself.

When I heard that "Indio-American" idea, I could hardly help laughing in his face. I could

imagine what the Argentine, Chilean and Uraguayan leaders would look like when they received that proposition. The foremost men in Argentina come from old colonial families. They are polished and refined in manners. They went to school for the most part in Paris. Chileans have the dignified and chivalrous bearing of the warriors of the Conquest, to which they add a perfect English education. In Uruguay, the cultivated people show strong European influences in which the noblest Spanish tradition predominates.

"Indio-American nations!"

It would be just as appropriate to enter the White House in Washington and ask the President of the United States to take off his glasses, paint two red and blue rings around his eyes and replace his regulation tophat with a crown of feathers!

Mistakes of the United States

I must frankly confess that the policy of the United States toward Mexico in recent years has been a bad one.

It is not so much that the policy in itself has been bad.

The trouble with it has been that it has not been a policy.

From Mexico, the United States has looked like a boat steered by a drunken helmsman. It was as likely to head in one direction as another. None could tell where it would finally land.

I admire Wilson's wartime attitude toward European affairs. But, with his bitterest enemies, I recognize that in matters relating to Mexico his procedure has been incoherent.

He was with Huerta and against Huerta, with Carranza and against Carranza. At one time he was even with Villa, the bandit. I remember that years ago I saw an important American newspaper which carried a picture of Villa and an article entitled "The Mexican Napoleon."

I also recognize that all that Wilson did he did in the best of faith and with the object of arriving at the best possible solution. There were moments, besides, when the Mexican mess was involved enough to turn the steadiest man in the world crazy.

But Wilson's indecisive and variable conduct was fatal. Any policy at all, had it been con-

sistent and continuous, would have been preferable.

That, however, is beside the point. Many writers have dealt with Wilson and the Mexican question. I need not say over again what others have already proved so clearly.

How Carranza Used Us

As contrasted with Wilson, and once he was firmly seated in power, Carranza pursued a policy that was coherent, invariable and continuous.

Thanks to Don Venustiano, a new means of governing became familiar in Mexico. Very efficient recipes for controlling individuals and groups had been inherited from earlier régimes. The prison and the firing squad have always been considered persuasive instruments for bringing one's enemies to reason. But it sometimes happens that large portions of the population have to be intimidated. A general execution being impossible, some other device must be resorted to. Carranza hit upon the "threat of American intervention," "Yankee treachery," "the American menace," "the peril from the North."

During the last days of my stay in Mexico, I could see that things were going badly. The newspapers, which always took their queue from Barragan, who took his, in turn, from Don Venustiano, began to speak of the "Yankee peril" and "United States intervention" as an imminent possibility. Obregon's uprising, according to the editorials, was planned to furnish a pretext for an American invasion of the country, and Uncle Sam was waiting the word across the frontier, much as an actor stands behind a piece of scenery on the stage ready to come on at the dramatic moment. Such reports aimed to prevent sympathizers with the insurrection from joining in.

The "Iron Heel" Upon Cuba

Some of the dailies sent shivers up and down their readers' backs with the most terrible prophecies.

"If another revolution succeeds in Mexico," they said, "if the order established by the beneficent Government of Carranza is overthrown, the Americans will invade our territories; the iron heel will be pressed upon our necks; we shall fall so low in the scale of nations, our lot

will be so sad and so disgraceful that we will be virtually slaves, comparable only with . . . Cuba."

I was as much surprised at this comparison as I had been over Minister Cabrera's observations on Argentina and Chile. The hardest man in the world to convince is the man who wants to be wrong.

"My dear Sir," I said to the editor some days later, "go all over Cuba, if you wish, and I am sure you will fail to find that iron heel. The only American footwear you will discover on that island will be the zigzagging boots of some New Yorker who has fled to Havana to escape prohibition. Cuban real estate has quadrupled in value in recent years. People there are too rich, if anything; they are wallowing in money. Revolutions have gone out of style in Cuba. When anybody tries to start one, they just send him up to New York for a good time on Broadway."

The journalist looked at me half in surprise, half incredulously. The wife of a General, one of the newer hatch, gave me that same look when I laughed at her on one occasion. The lady told me she was anxious to spend a few weeks in

Havana, but did not dare to go because she had never learned English.

Value of the "American Danger"

The "American danger" is, as I was saying, one of the secrets of successful government in Mexico. The Generals are always using that argument. Otherwise the people might be inclined toward a civilian rule. Since the danger of intervention exists it is quite logical to leave military men in power; although those Generals, quite aside from their personal courage, know just about as much military science as I do.

Carranza, for his part, was never in such good humor, never so self-assured, never so convinced of his mission on earth, as when he was arguing a diplomatic question with the United States. Several of the diplomats I met in Washington were following the Mexican negotiations with this country as a matter of professional interest, and one of them, a man of letters, found a phrase that summed up the situation exactly: "Carranza is doing his best to cultivate the incident."

The "cultivation of incidents," as well as the delight was also the supreme talent of Don Venustiano. When he received some demand from the United States he must have smiled as a boxing master smiles when he sees an opening for a tap on his pupil's jaw. "Why, here is another incident just as things were getting dull. I must cultivate it carefully. If I manage right I can stick in the world's head lines for a month or more."

Carranza in His Element

Diplomatic proceedings, like legal proceedings in court, have their delays and postponements. I do not know the usual time allotted for replying to a diplomatic communication. Call it ten days; it was ten days of keen amusement and anticipation for Don Venustiano. First he would see Cabrera, his Mephistopheles, and then would call a council of *licenciados*, "doctors of law," professional squabblers of the district courts, expert in nosing out the trivial excuse, the fantastic objection, the microscopic point of legality. Their masterpiece of deliberate absurdity would be ready on the tenth day, and it would reach Washington at

two minutes before midnight. "Fifty years ago, and again one hundred years ago, the United States Government took the position now maintained by the Mexican Republic. . . ." The answer would be always in such terms.

Washington, irritated at the delay, would immediately reply: "Omitting your review of ancient precedents, kindly give a definite answer to the demand now in question."

Another smile of Don Venustiano. . . .

Another council of *licenciados*. . . .

Another interval of ten days.

And then: "In reply to note one thousand three hundred and seventy-seven, we beg to point out that on the point it raises, the United States Supreme Court ruled in 1827. . . ."

Weeks and even months would go by in this nervous expectation. A matter that two serious business men could have settled in five minutes would assume the proportions of a world crisis. Newspapers would issue extras. People in the United States would begin to speculate on the chances of war. Parties in Mexico would talk of getting together to resist intervention, likely to break on the following day.

Meanwhile in the Presidential palace in the

Mexican capital a venerable old man would be winking slyly behind a pair of blue glasses and stroking a white beard in wise satisfaction.

Home Estimate of "Old Whiskers"

Don Venustiano would always yield in the end, before public tension became overstrained and the game got too dangerous. He would do simply what had been asked in the first place; but it would be thought in Mexico that he had done much less and that, thanks to its energy and skilful diplomacy, the American invasion had been stopped on the threshold of the country and at little cost to the dignity of the nation.

The "old man" knew what he was about, and he knew his people well. I have heard his most relentless foes say of him: "Old Whiskers is a . . . " (and here the worst of epithets and the most atrocious slander), "but you've got to give him credit for one thing—he's a patriot, and he has kept the Yankees out many times. No one could handle the international situation better."

And Carranza's admirers would imagine in all good faith that in Washington, President,

Cabinet, Senate and House were seeing with terror in their dreams the red-white-and-green nose, the white beard and the ogrelike smile of Don Venustiano.

That is the way with Mexicans. They escape from the cruel realities which surround them by caressing the illusion that they are first in something. Thus can be explained Cabrera's complacent disparagement of Chile and Argentina, the iron heel that is oppressing Cuba, the tyrannical imposition of English upon Havana's schools, and the flight of American statesmanship before the terrible Carranza.

Unfortunately, however, Don Venustiano has trained a school and created a succession in Mexican diplomacy. All who are to follow him have learned the lesson that "the incident must be cultivated." As new disputes arise with the United States, their solutions will be deferred as long as possible that somebody may be able to pose as the savior of his country.

And if some General-President is unlucky enough not to come by an "incident" honestly, he will be quite capable of making one for himself.

The Present a Time to Be Amiable

I am well aware that for some months to come there will be no "cultivation of incidents" in Mexico. Carranza himself did no such gardening while, with his future problematical and insecure, he was staying in Vera Cruz and needed American support. He began the game long afterward, when he thought himself solidly established in power. Obregon and his friends will be very deferential, very polite, very humble even, if necessary, toward the United States. Their position has not yet been consolidated. Their Government has not yet been recognized by other nations. A corpse is standing in the way—the corpse of "old man" Carranza. So the corpse of Madero rose menacingly in the path of Huerta!

Besides, there is a question, a question of the first importance, which dominates all other Mexican questions and demands an answer urgently.

Mexico, which might be the richest country in the world, next to the United States, is in a very precarious situation. The taxes on pe-

troleum and minerals (both owned in large part by Americans) and the proceeds of internal imposts are barely sufficient to meet the most pressing State expenditures.

The revolution destroyed much without replacing anything; and the absence of all that was stolen, or dismantled to nobody's profit, is beginning to make itself felt.

The result is that, to go on living, the country needs a loan of hundreds of millions.

Carranza had the project of a loan in mind for a long time before his death, though he never had the courage to propose it publicly. He was conscious of his bad reputation in matters of national finance. All the banks in the world would say "no," in comment on the doings of his financial advisers with foreign banks and foreign enterprises in Mexico. Besides he was jealous of his reputation with the lower classes, and he preferred to leave the Presidency without having negotiated a foreign loan. That pleasure he was reserving for Bonillas, who, he supposed, had powerful financial friends in the United States and would be in a position to find millions.

Plea for a Loan Coming

The new governors of Mexico will come out with their request within a few weeks, or a few months at most. Formerly such petitions could be addressed to a number of possible sources; English, French and German financial firms existed in abundance in Mexico. But now they have all failed or else are badly in need of money for themselves. The United States is the only market open. When they want ready money they will have to come here.

American financiers do not require any advising. They know all they need to know about foreign countries and their minds must be already made up concerning Mexico. That country has not paid interest on its old debts for several years, and its fake revolutionaries are alone to blame. They have dishonored themselves in the eyes of all their creditors, completely destroying the remnants of Mexico's prestige surviving from a happy time when the republic was solvent and could get money anywhere.

If I am not mistaken, American finance will make this answer: "We will lend you nothing at all. A loan to you would serve to foment

militarism, aggravate present wrongs and perpetuate a crying shame. We should be glad to help Mexico in her distress and give her ample credit; but only when the republic has a civilian government, a government of people who have traveled, who know how to develop a country, who know how to deal with people of other nations, and are able to think as white people think. To you Generals, not a penny!"

And in fact the way to put an end to militarism of the Mexican kind, a militarism so deceitfully revolutionary, so immoral and so German, is not to give a penny.

THE END